THE HEADLESS CITY: THE DECLINE AND FALL OF CAPUA IN SILIUS ITALICUS' *PUNICA*

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Capua in Silius Italicus' *Punica* stands for Carthage and Rome in numerous ways, as locus of luxury, Oriental colony, and rival for world hegemony.[1] Capua also stands for both Carthage and Rome inasmuch as she is a city to be sacked. Guilty though she is, she is a victim of Rome. In her rôle as rival for supremacy she resembles Alba Longa, Veii and all the other cities which must by necessity fall for Rome to stand. The fall of the city – even though it is spared an actual sack – echoes that of Saguntum in many ways, as both recall the sack of Troy and prefigure that of Carthage,[2] and stand as surrogates for the fall of Rome which will not come to pass, or at least not yet. To some extent all descriptions of *urbes captae* resemble each other, the *topos* becoming an established one, but that does not preclude the exploitation of that resemblance to draw parallels between sacks.[3] Various aspects of the Roman recapture of the city may be read to underline the episode's significance as a parallel, a substitute, and an adumbration of other sacks.

1. The Eye of the Tiger

The two Capuan narratives – that of the Carthaginian sojourn which leads to their corruption and emasculation by Venus, and the Romans' siege and capture of the city – are structured around Hannibal's failed attack on Rome. The latter incident is one of several central hinges upon which the poem turns,[4] the others being the sojourn at Capua itself and, most significantly, the battle of Cannae, which is structurally marked as a turning point in the whole of Roman history.[5] After the central confrontation with Jupiter at the walls of his city, Hannibal's story begins almost to run in reverse as he moves further from Rome,[6] his victories becoming defeats, and finally ends back in Carthage.[7] One means of structuring this reversal is the parallelism of the occupation and relinquishing of Capua. In intertextual terms, Hannibal changes from an Aeneas sojourning at Carthage to a Turnus shocked by an attack on Latinus' city. This alteration begins even before the march on Rome.

While busy besieging Tarentum, Hannibal hears of the Roman attack on Capua and hastens to relieve it (12.448-62). Hannibal's strong emotional reaction here is in marked contrast to the measured calculation which Livy describes (26.5.1-2). The passions of *ira, pudor, ferocia* and *rabies* mark out Hannibal not only as an ungoverned, uncontrolled

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[1] Cowan (2002) 34-68.

[2] On Capua foreshadowing Carthage, Küppers (1986) 184. This is *his* reading of *Capua altera Carthago*. Cf. von Albrecht (1964) 39, Burck (1984b) 52.

[3] On the *topos*, see Paul (1982), Kraus (1994) 270-8.

[4] 'Das Epos hat nun sein Höhepunkt überschritten. Die dramatische Spannung, die jede Phase des Kriegsgeschehens zielstrebig als Bedrohung der heiligen Mauern Roms erscheinen ließ, läßt nach.' von Albrecht (1964) 39.

[5] On Cannae as the centre of the poem and Roman history: Ahl-Davis-Pomeroy (1986) 2505-11, Tipping (2004).

[6] In so doing, he reverses Aeneas' journey and mimics that of Lucan's Pompey, who is himself an inverted Aeneas in this sense, as Rossi (2000: 572) notes. Ahl-Davis-Pomeroy (1986: 2516) suggest that Hannibal's eventual exile in Pontus ('not far from…Troy'!) ends his career where Aeneas' began. They more credibly compare the reversal of Aeneas' fortunes in Verg. *A.* 1 with Hannibal's in *Pun.* 17 (*ibid.* 2515-6); Gossage (1969: 83) nicely notes the reversal in the storm scene but limply concludes 'it is as though Aeneas is finally avenged by the suffering of Hannibal.' On Hannibal and Pompey, see Ahl-Davis-Pomeroy (1986) 2516-8.

[7] A modern parallel is Berg's *Lulu* where the rise and fall of the anti-heroine's fortunes are musically structured around a palindromic pseudo-film score at the centre of the opera. On which see Jarman (1991) 56-7.

figure,[8] but as passionately involved in the fate of Capua.[9] The mixture of emotions which urge a hero to abandon a fruitless task in favour of defending a city to which he is emotionally attached cannot but recall Turnus' response to Saces' plea for aid.[10] Hannibal therefore echoes (appropriately enough) an enemy of the Trojans, but (more problematically) one who is summoned to the aid of a city whose assault is depicted as a replay and reversal of the sack of Troy.[11] Silius thus connects Capua to Troy, but primarily through the Trojans' appropriation of the victorious role of city-sackers, rather than *bis capti Phryges*, in their attack on the city of Latinus; this anticipates the similar, and more pervasive, paralleling of Capua with Alba Longa. Not only must the reader decide how precisely to interpret Capua's intertextual relationship with Virgil's Troy, but she must do so by comparing it with cities – Ennius' Alba, Virgil's city of Latinus, and his Trojan camp – whose relationship to Troy is itself problematic.

Hannibal's strength of emotion is reinforced by the simile comparing him to a tigress (12.458-62):

> *haud secus, amisso tigris si concita fetu*
> *emicet, attonitae paucis lustratur in horis*
> *Caucasus et saltu tramittitur alite Ganges,*
> *donec fulmineo partus uestigia cursu*
> *colligat et rabiem prenso consumat in hoste.*

Though the ostensible point of comparison is their great speed, it is the emotional element which is more important, the sense of loss, grief and anger.[12] Indeed, the simile supplies the two emotions felt by Turnus which were lacking from Silius' description of Hannibal's emotions: he already felt *pudor* and *ira* (restated here in *rabiem*, which also picks up *insania*), but here (unstated but clearly implicit) are the *amor* which the tigress feels for her cubs and her *luctus* at their loss. The detail of the beast's Caucasian origins may recall an earlier simile when Hannibal at the battle of the Trebia, having just received his shield, is compared to a Caucasian tigress whose very presence clears the plain of other beasts.[13] In the detail of the simile, Hannibal has moved from a position of dominance to one of threat, but also of emotional concern. The simile alludes most strongly to that in *Iliad* 18 when Achilles' grief at the death of Patroclus is compared to that of a lion who finds its cubs stolen

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[8] Burck (1984b) 35.

[9] The passionate feelings towards Capua, whether to save or destroy, are shared by the Romans. In addition to its epic intertexts, this simile is also a reversal of the analogy used by Livy's Virrius to illustrate the implacable hatred of the Romans for Capua and their determination, which could not even be shaken by Hannibal's threat to Rome: *feras bestias caeco impetu ac rabie concitatas, si ad cubilia et catulos earum ire pergas, ad opem suis ferendam auertas: Romanos Roma circumsessa coniuges, liberi, quorum ploratus hinc prope exaudiebantur, arae foci deum delubra sepulcra maiorum temerata ac uiolata a Capua non auerterunt; tanta auiditas supplicii expetendi, tanta sanguinis nostri hauriendi est sitis*. Liv. 26.13.12-3.

[10] *pennasque addente pudore | atque ira simul immani* 12.455-6 ~ Verg. *A*. 12.666-71, esp. 666-8: *aestuat ingens | uno in corde pudor mixtoque insania luctu | et furiis agitatus amor et conscia uirtus*. On Turnus' emotions, see esp. Hershkowitz (1998) 68-95, and, for a (characteristically) more negative interpretation privileging shame over the other emotions, see Schenk (1984) 177-85. For another Silian engagement with the Turnus and Saces scene, when Paulus refuses to leave Cannae, see Cowan 'Reading Trojan Rome' (forthcoming).

[11] 'The fall of Troy is mirrored by the siege of Latinus' city.' Hershkowitz (1998) 82.

[12] Edwards (1991: 184 *ad* Hom. *Il.* 18.318-22) similarly notes that the formal point of comparison in the Homeric simile discussed below is the roar, but that it is the emotional parallel which is important.

[13] von Albrecht (1964) 109 believes Silius 'invented' this simile, while Matier (1986: 155) notes that it is 'without exact parallels.' The other tiger similes in the poem (both missing from the list at Matier (1986) 153) are the brief one where the Spaniard Atlas hides from Appius like a deer from a tigress (5.280-1) and that illustrating the death of Paulus at Cannae (10.293-7, elegantly discussed at Hutchinson (1992) 291-2). The only tiger simile in the *Aeneid* is that describing Turnus loose inside the Trojan camp (Verg. *A*. 9.730). It must be admitted that these and other tigers in Silius are regularly associated with the Caucasus: 4.331, 5.148 (Flaminius' saddle!), 15.81 (Bacchus' train) or Hyrcania: 5.281, both of which are combined in Dido's assessment of Aeneas' upbringing at Verg. *A*. 4.367.

by a hunter (Hom. *Il.* 18.318-22). The striking nature of this simile, expressing a friendship in terms of parental love,[14] could be blunted in imitation,[15] but is transformed into a still bolder usage by Silius, who thus evokes Hannibal's feelings towards Capua as those of a friend, a mother, even – if the post-Homeric interpretation of Achilles and Patroclus is taken into account – a lover. Capua is not only his *altera patria* (11.424), but an object of love to be protected or avenged. This comparison of Capua to an animal, and to animal to which a person is being compared, anticipates the way in which Capua will be figured – in similes, metaphorically, allegorically, and often by an indeterminate mixture of the three – as (like) a man: Taurea aimed at by Claudius, the beheaded Ascanius, Taurea again at his suicide
Yet it is also, if one is willing to accept the simile's multiple correspondences, the offspring of a tiger, as opposed to the lion-cubs which represent Patroclus. By far the most common implication of being the offspring of a tiger, and especially of a Caucasian tiger, is not as a source of grief to one's mother, but as a cruel and hard-hearted beast.[16] It may be possible to read the transformation from lion to tiger as marking the hard, impious nature of the treacherous Capuans.[17]

The combination of models for Hannibal, Turnus in defeat and Achilles in grief, and possibly for the city itself, complicate the reader's reaction to Capua, and to the Romans' assault on it. However, as with so much of the relation of Capua's recapture, the narrative expectation is frustrated. Hannibal is neither a Turnus slain by a Roman Aeneas nor does he avenge the attack like an Achilles. Rather, finding himself overwhelmed by the magnitude of the Roman forces ranged against him, he himself performs the act of substitution which is the reverse of that which the poet has been playing all the while: Rome for Capua.[18] In the scales, he will weigh the sack of his city, Capua – his Latinus' city in his rôle as Turnus, his Troy as Aeneas, his Carthage as Hannibal – against the chance to sack Rome, to re-sack Troy.[19] The Capuan narrative will only resume early in the next book, when he has failed, and the palindromic reverse of his advance towards Rome properly begins.

2. The White Hart

Just as Fulvius is commencing his siege of Capua, a *dextrum…omen* suddenly shines kindly on his efforts (13.115). Silius describes a doe, a deer, a female deer, whose introduction in classic ekphrastic fashion marks as clearly as possible its engagement with Virgil's

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14 On the simile, see Moulton (1977) 105-6, Lonsdale (1990) 89-90, 133 Edwards (1991) 184 *ad loc.,* Mills (2000) 9.

15 Both Seneca and Statius echo the simile but – either cleverly or banally – apply it to characters who are actually in danger of losing their offspring: Medea at *Med.* 862-5 and Atalanta, when Parthenopaeus wishes to join the Septem at *Theb.* 4.315-16. As with Silius, the ostensible point of comparison is actually speed, though the grief, rage and bond of affection are the more significant issues. Valerius, more subtly, compares Jason to the hunter when he persuades Acastus to sail with the Argonauts at V.Fl. 1.489-93, adumbrating Pelias' rage and grief at 1.700-23.

16 Arguably the *locus classicus* is Dido to Aeneas at Verg. *A.* 4.367 – technically of suckling rather than mothering – notably adding the animal element which is absent from Patroclus' reproach to Achilles at Hom. *Il.* 16.33-5. Ovid is particularly fond of the image, using it at *Met.* 7. 32 (with Bömer (1976) 206-7 *ad loc.*), 8.120-1, 9.613-5, *Tr.* 1.8.43. An exception is the hard-hearted offspring of a *leaena montibus Libystinis* at Catul. 60.1.

17 I am extremely tentative about this situation, partly because of the Catullan counter-example above, partly because Seneca, Statius and Valerius all also use tigers in their similes (n.15 above). It may be that the significant shift was made earlier, either by Seneca with the result that Silius is engaging intertextually with him (they have the Ganges in common, as Ripoll (1999: 510 n65) notes), or in a lost work, so that all four are making an unrecoverable erudite point.

18 *defendere nobis | si Capuam ereptum est, dabitur circumdare Romam.* 12.505-6. Cf. Liv. 26.12.1. For a more favourable account of Hannibal's attempts to relieve Capua, see Polyb. 9.8.1-9.4.

19 '*eia, incute muris | umbonem Iliacis Capuaeque repende ruinas.*' 12.514-5. *eia* is a predominantly colloquial, and hence comedic word. There may conceivably be some echo of its use at Verg. *A.* 9.38 when Caicus first espies Turnus approaching the Trojan camp. Mercury also uses it in his second visitation to Aeneas at 4.569. Spaltenstein (1990) 189 *ad* 12.515 temptingly floats the possibility that *ruinas* could refer 'aux délices de Capoue, la *ruina* des guerriers puniques' but prefers the more obvious interpretation.

description of Silvia's pet hind, whose death at the hands – or rather bow – of Ascanius finally sparked the Trojan-Italian war.[20] The deer was tamed by Capys when he was founding the city and became not only its pet but its *numen*, living for as many years as it stood. Now, however, wolves enter the city by night and drive it in fear from the city, where it is captured by the Roman soldiers and sacrificed to Diana by Fulvius himself. This episode seems to be Silius' own invention,[21] and as such demands particular attention. Its significance for the Capuan narrative and for the poem as a whole derives partly from its intertextuality with the Virgilian deer – and her other epic offspring – partly from its symbolic quality.

As ever, one's reading of one text in dialogue with another must partly depend upon one's reading of that other text, even when the dialogue itself affects that reading. The episode of Silvia's stag has been the subject of some of the most diverse and divergent readings, dating from – at the latest – Macrobius' mockery of it in his *Saturnalia*.[22] It can be emblematic of the Trojans' impact upon pastoral Italy, reminiscent of Aeneas' treatment of Dido and proleptic of that of Turnus, both of whom are the subjects of deer similes.[23] Alternatively, it can be merely an accident, or rather a malign intervention by the forces of disorder, designed to spark war without incriminating either Trojan or Latin, emblematic of 'the wretched process by which a trivial incident generates its own momentum for war.'[24]

In all of these various readings, the death of the deer is unquestionably a negative event, inspired by hell and provoking bloody civil war on earth. The death of Silius' hart, on the other hand, is signalled in – at worst – neutral terms, as a favourable omen for the Romans, a wretched one for the Capuans.[25] Though it is not itself the *casus belli*, it does stand very near the beginning of the siege in a comparable structural position, inviting the reader to draw comparisons. Yet what manner of comparisons should these be? One approach would be to take the passage as an antiphrastic imitation, the positive import of the omen of the white hart standing out more sharply in relief against the dark chaos of Ascanius' hunting. Most readers, however, would find it difficult not to allow the infernal, invasive, internecine elements which may be found in the Virgilian episode to enter a reading of the Silian, and thus, in dialogue, colour their interpretation of the *Aeneid*. Whether or not it was an unwitting act, whether or not it was a necessary evil in the process *Romanam condere gentem*, the death of Silvia's stag does constitute – or at least represent – the destruction of beauty by power, the assertion of control by the strong over the weak, more specifically the assertion of Trojan, Roman power over the Italian countryside. If a reader of the *Aeneid* finds this position at the very least disputable, a reader of the *Punica* must surely feel it strongly suggested when she translates the emblematic victory of the Roman wolf and the Roman general over the Capuan hind back into her reading of the *Aeneid*, and thence the infernal civil war back once more to the *Punica*. Needless to say, the situation is more

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[20] *cerua fuit* 13.115 ~ *ceruus erat* Verg. *A.* 7.481-3. On the episode, see Heurgon (1942) 324-6, Franchet d'Esperey (1977), Burck (1984b) 38-9.

[21] There is certainly no reference to it in Livy or the other extant historians. Heurgon (1942: 324-6) argues that Silius is following an established tradition.

[22] Macrob. *Sat.* 5.17.1. Useful – if tendentious – surveys of and references to views on the episode are to be found at Griffin, J. (1985) 170-1 and Horsfall (2000) 319-21 *ad* Verg. *A.* 7.475-539.

[23] Dido: Verg. *A.* 4.69-74, Turnus: 12.746-55. Nethercut (1968) 94-5 compares the death of the deer to the latter simile as part of a wider negative portrayal of hunting in the poem; Putnam (1998) 97-118 sees the episode as the generic intrusion of epic into pastoral-didactic, and emblematic of Aeneas' treatment of Turnus; Vance (1981) subtly interprets it as an illustration of oppositions between domesticity and wildness, civilisation and nature, an argument unfairly oversimplified by Horsfall *loc. cit.* Griffin, J. (1985) 170-2 incorporates it into his wider reading of a Virgil who mourns but accepts necessary loss and suffering: 'the effect of the Trojan destiny; to cause suffering without willing it, to cause the destruction of so many beautiful things, from Silvia's stag to the singer Cretheus.' For an interesting take on the legal niceties of the case, see Starr (1992).

[24] Feeney (1991) 172.

[25] *dextrum…omen* 13.145, *miserabile bello | prodigium* 131-2.

complex than a simple condemnation of – or lament for – the Juggernaut of Roman imperialism. Indeed, I would not wish even to argue for such a stark position in a narrative whose broadest outlines, at least, construct the Roman victory over Capua – as over Carthage – as a divinely sanctioned victory of *Fides*. Rather the introduction of the Virgilian intertext complicates the reader's response as well as the associations and symbolisms of both Rome and Capua.

Many of these associations may be derived from the passage as it stands, even before any dialogue with Virgil begins, and it will be worth quoting in full (13.115-37):

> *tum subito dextrum offulsit conatibus omen.*
> *cerua fuit, raro terris spectata colore,*
> *quae candore niuem, candore anteiret olores.*
> *hanc agreste Capys donum, cum moenia sulco*
> *signaret, grato paruae mollitus amore*
> *nutrierat sensusque hominis donarat alendo.*
> *inde exuta feram docilisque accedere mensis*
> *atque ultro blanda attactu gaudebat erili.*
> *aurato matres adsuetae pectine mitem*
> *comere et umenti fluuio reuocare colorem.*
> *numen erat iam cerua loci, famulamque Dianae*
> *credebant, ac tura deum de more dabantur.*
> *haec aeui uitaeque tenax felixque senectam*
> *mille indefessos uiridem duxisse per annos*
> *saeclorum numero Troianis condita tecta*
> *aequabat. sed iam longo nox uenerat aeuo.*
> *nam, subito incursu saeuorum agitata luporum*
> *qui noctis tenebris urbem (miserabile bello*
> *prodigium) intrarant, primos ad luminis ortus*
> *extulerat sese portis pauidaque petebat*
> *consternata fuga positos ad moenia campos.*
> *exceptam laeto iuuenum certamine ductor*
> *mactat, diua, tibi (tibi enim haec gratissima sacra)*
> *Fuluius atque 'adsis,' orat 'Latonia, coeptis.'*

In order to understand how the episode operates, it is essential that we consider what manner of omen this is. The pre-occupation of the Romans with auspices, omens and prodigies is well attested, well known and well discussed.[26] Wolves, moreover, are a very common feature in these means of divination. However, it is worth making a functional distinction between prodigies and omens. As Levene succinctly expresses his taxonomy, 'like auspices, [prodigies] did not as a rule have any content – they did not foretell anything in particular, but merely put forward a general warning of disaster unless appropriate precautions were taken…[whereas omens have the] possibility of having content, of actually telling one details about the future, instead of simply expressing divine favour or disfavour.'[27] Most

[26] A select bibliography might include Bloch (1963), MacBain (1982), Levene (1993) index s.v. omens. On prodigies in the *Aeneid*, see Grassmann-Fischer (1966). Omens were still a feature of contemporary life in the time up to and including the Flavian era. Perhaps most notable were the omens of Vespasian's reign listed at Suet. *Vesp.* 5, Tac. *Hist.* 1.10, 2.1, 78, on which see Morgan, M. (1993) & (1996).

[27] Levene (1993) 4-5. As defined in these terms, both omens and prodigies occur in the *Punica*. Prodigies: before Trasimene, sacred chickens fasting, bulls escaping sacrifice, blood from the earth, lightning on the lake, 5.59-76, cf. Liv. 22.3.11, Cic. *Div.* 1.77, with Le Bonniec (1980); before Cannae, spontaneous combustion, uncanny weather, bees, ghosts, general nature in turmoil, 8.622-55, cf. (contrast?) Liv. 22.36.7, with Fucecchi (1999) for interplay with Lucan; at Syphax'

appearances by wolves fall firmly into the former category.[28] Thus the howling wolves which are among Virgil's prodigies for the death of Caesar do not represent any aspect of his assassination, but rather reflect a disturbance in the cosmos.[29] Similar are the omens which Horace dismisses at the beginning of the propemptikon to his mistress.[30] There are numerous occurrences of wolves – usually in the city, especially shocking if on the Capitol – in the prodigy lists which Livy incorporates from the annalistic tradition.[31] Yet these are listed without comment and the relevant expiatory or purificatory rites performed.[32] No symbolic or in any way prophetic message is derived from them. To some extent, our incident falls into this category, since Silius calls the whole incident an *omen* (13.114) but uses the word *prodigium* (132) to refer specifically, and apparently solely, to the entrance of the wolves into the city. This element of the narrative thus evokes the uncanny feel of the prodigy, widely paralleled in Roman history, but is incorporated into the more symbolic, prophetic omen of the epic tradition.

If the episode is then – in these terms – an omen rather than a prodigy, it requires interpretation. What do the wolves and the hart respectively represent, and what does the former's invasion of the city, the latter's flight and sacrifice mean? Before looking at epic parallels, it is worth examining an example from Livy. Before the battle of Sentinum, the Romans are ranged opposite the combined forces of the Gauls and Samnites, about to join battle, when a strange omen occurs (Liv. 10.27.8-9):

> *cum instructae acies starent, cerua fugiens lupum e montibus exacta per campos inter duas acies decurrit; inde diuersae ferae, cerua ad Gallos, lupus ad Romanos cursum deflexit. lupo data inter ordines uia; ceruam Galli confixere. tum ex antesignanis Romanus miles 'illac fuga' inquit 'et caedes uertit, ubi sacram Dianae feram iacentem uidetis; hinc uictor Martius lupus, integer et intactus, gentis nos Martiae et conditoris nostri admonuit.'*

Here we have, not a generalised, uncanny prodigy to be expiated by a generalised lustration, but a specific omen, such as one might find in epic,[33] one whose symbolic action is capable of interpretation, and for that matter misinterpretation. Here the exegete is no haruspex or authorised figure, but an anonymous Roman soldier. The wolf in this instance is not ill-omened – or at least not in our amateur augur's interpretation – but a victor, one who has chosen the Roman rather than the Gallic side and, perhaps most importantly, a creature who recalls and is associated with Rome's founder and hence her patron Mars. [34] The deer runs into the Gallic ranks and is killed. Ironically, the Gauls both bring disaster upon themselves

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court, bull escapes sacrifice, 16.262-71. Omens: before Ticinus, bird omen, 4.101-19, on which see p.88 below. For a generalised survey of such phenomena in the poem, which does not make this distinction, see Rothschild (1995) 109-11.

[28] There is a convenient list of wolves appearing in prodigies and omens at *TLL* VII.2.1853.52ff. s.v. *lupus* I.A.e *in prodigiis sim.* MacBain (1982) 82-106 provides an index of prodigies from the age of Tullius Hostilius to 363 ad.

[29] Verg. *G.* 1.485-6, cf. Claud. *Eutr.* 1.2. The ease with which Ovid alters them to dogs (a deliberate diminution of grandeur, perhaps) at *Met.* 15.796-7 illustrates their non-specific nature.

[30] Hor. *Carm.* 3.27.2-3. The wolf at 1.22.9-16 is fearsome as a wild beast and a *portentum* because of its unItalian size, but there may be some suggestion of the wolf's rôle as an ill-omened animal.

[31] Wolves in Rome: Liv. 33.26.9, 41.9.6; on the Capitol: 3.29.9, 32.29.2; a wolf in Capua: 27.37.3. Since Roman camps were small versions of Rome, the wolf which breaks into the camp before the battle of Ticinus is precisely analogous: 21.46.2. The incident of the wolf which steals the sword from the sheath of a soldier in Gaul at 21.62.5 is of a different type, but comparable.

[32] On expiatory rites, see McBain (1982) esp. 33-42, 120-1.

[33] The influence of epic on historiography – *proxima poetis et quodam modo carmen solutum* (Quint. *Or.* 10.1.31) – should not of course be discounted.

[34] On the omen, see Oakley (2005) 273-4 and *ad loc.* Bayet (1962) unconvincingly interprets the wolf as ill-omened for the Romans, as verified by the need for Decius' *deuotio* in the battle. Feldherr (1998: 91) links the imagery of the omen to the *deuotio* and its effect on the battle.

by impiously killing a beast sacred to Diana, and are embodied in the deer itself, since they are to suffer the same fate, flight and slaughter, they are to be the *uicti* to the *uictores,* the Romans, embodied by the *uictor*, the wolf. To this complex of associations is added the sense that the deer does not merely represent the Gauls, who will suffer flight and slaughter, but is an embodiment of that flight and slaughter, that she carries it with her like a miasma. This sense is underscored by the verbal play: the animals *turned* in different directions, *diuersae*, the deer *turned*, *deflexit*, towards the Gauls; thus the soldier substitutes the abstract nouns for their symbols as flight and slaughter *turn*, *uertit*, over there. Whether or not one wishes to see in Silius' episode an allusion to this passage, its parallels in both outline and detail are significant enough to make it an important intertext.

In the passage we have just examined, the wolf clearly stands – or is made to stand – for the Romans, this association being facilitated by the animal's existing links with the city as the wet-nurse of Romulus and creature of Mars. Is the same true of the wolves in Silius? Before answering this question, it will be instructive briefly to survey the other wolves, especially the symbolic wolves, in the poem.[35] The first wolf to appear is the very beast which forges the species' link with Rome, the *lupa* who suckled Romulus, appearing on Flaminius' shield as he prepares for the battle of Trasimene, just as she had on Aeneas' (5.142-5 ~ Verg. *A.* 8.630-4). The second comes during the long inset narrative of the old soldier Marus describing his former general Regulus' part in the First Punic War (6.117-551). In a simile describing the mercenary general Xanthippus' ruse to ambush Regulus, the Spartan is compared to a shepherd placing a bleating lamb in or by a concealed pit to trap a wolf (6.329-31). The association of Regulus with the wolf is unexpected, inasmuch as this emblem of Roman qualities,[36] whose story is narrated by a loyal veteran to comfort the general's son, is figured as the marauding wolf, tempted by the fraudulent (*fraudem nectens* 6.326) mercenary qua shepherd defending his stables. If one were to read any further levels into this imagery, the bold, invasive Roman venturing into Carthaginian territory is not necessarily the straightforwardly positive figure which the narrative voice depicts.[37] At the same time, the aptness of the association of wolf with Roman, beast of Mars with scion of *gens Martia*, is hinted at by the repeated references to the war-god: Regulus is drawn on by the *incerti fallax fiducia Martis*, not merely the fortune of war, but betrayal by his ancestral god as is made clear by Marus' reproaches to him for betraying a Roman and a warrior, bound to him by both rôles.[38]

Romans as marauding wolves constitute a potent image, not least for the

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[35] I pass briefly over the wolf which suckles the Sicilian Polyphemus at 14.527-31, sign of his barbaric nature and a translation to the literal of the conventional reproach 'Your father did not beget you, but…' (on which see n.16 above). Even here, however, the detail of being suckled by a wolf cannot but evoke Romulus (as Spaltenstein (1990) 326 *ad loc.* concedes) and thus imply that the Romans had the hereditary disposition to be as savage as Polyphemus. This permits the text a little more self-awareness than the otherwise comparable observations of Hutchinson (1992) 120: 'Roman legend is ingeniously applied to an enemy of Rome, and made to express ferocity (*lupa*…is forcefully placed)' with n.15: 'Silius will not have been aware that the myth may have had an anti-Roman origin.'

[36] On Regulus as a Stoic figure, especially in his battle with the serpent, see Bassett (1955) and, with reservations, Billerbeck (1985) 351-2, (1986) 3141-3; as an exemplum of *uirtus* and especially *fides*, see von Albrecht (1964) 62-8, Kißel (1979) 122-3.

[37] The earliest reference to the famous story of the peace embassy is Cic. *Off.* 3.99. On the subsequent tradition, see the list of references at von Albrecht (1964) 63 n.42, with subsequent discussion and further references. The counter-tradition is represented by Polyb. 1.35, who meditates on the tragic peripeteia of Regulus' story, how a pitiless and merciless man was forced to ask for pity and mercy as a captive, and Diod. 23.15.1-6, who adds Regulus' arrogance. Walbank (1957: 194 *ad* Polyb. 1.35) asserts of the peace mission: 'It seems well established that this story was wholly legendary, and invented by annalists to cover up the well-founded tradition that after Regulus' (natural) death in captivity, his widow tortured two Punic prisoners held in the custody of the Atilii, so that one died.' His excessive individual audacity in battle is suggested by Silius' (Marus'?) remark: *abripuit traxitque uirum fax mentis honestae | gloria et incerti fallax fiducia Martis. | non socios comitumue manus, non arma sequentum | respicere: insano pugnae tendebat amore | iam solus;* 6.332-6.

[38] *o diram Latio lucem, fastisque notandum | dedecus o, Gradiue, tuum! tibi dextera et urbi | nata tuae tristi damnatur sorte catenae.* 6. 339-41.

interpretation of our episode. However, it is not the Romans but Hannibal who is compared to a pack of wolves twice, in two linked similes in book seven. In the first, Fabius' famous delaying tactics have so frustrated Hannibal that the Roman may sit as *spectator* while the Carthaginian vaunts and rages, like a shepherd watching wolves howling outside a secure fold (7.126-30):

> *ceu nocte sub atra*
> *munitis pastor stabulis per ouilia clausum*
> *impauidus somni seruat pecus: effera saeuit*
> *atque impasta trucis ululatus turba luporum*
> *exercet morsuque quatit restantia claustra.*

Here the ethnic rôles are reversed and Fabius is the shepherd, protecting his Roman sheep,[39] Hannibal the marauding wolves, savage like those who will chase the Capuan hart. This echoes the wolf simile from *Aeneid* 9 where Turnus prowls outside the Trojan camp looking for a way in.[40] Hannibal is thus aligned with the enemy of Rome, the outsider attempting to attack her, or her surrogate, the Trojan camp. He does not, however, succeed, unlike his Rutulian model. Turnus – in a second wolf simile, linked to the first – successfully kills Lycus, appropriating the rôle the latter's name should give him,[41] and snatches a lamb like a wolf, progressing from his earlier lupine frustration. Hannibal too has brief success, snatching the lamb Minucius, but is forced to drop his prey while it is still breathing when the shepherd Fabius returns and chases him off (7.717-22).[42] Yet it is not so much the intertextuality with Turnus which I wish to emphasise here, as the complication of the imagery of the wolf. In this book, the Roman emblem of the wolf, so marked earlier by Flaminius and Marus, is associated with Hannibal. Moreover, the wolf here is explicitly *Martius*, partly to mark the martial import of the simile, linking the animal to the soldier, partly to signal the intertextuality with Turnus' similarly-epitheted *lupus*, partly to colour this wolf the more as a Roman wolf.[43] By the time we read the omen of the hart and the wolves, therefore, the complex of associations surrounding the latter is immense, both friendly and hostile, hunter and victim, Roman and unRoman.

If the wolf thus stands in the middle of a network of associations, the significance of the hart is no less complex. On the broadest level, deer are conventionally swift and timid, the prey of hunters, be they human or animal.[44] This last is the ubiquitous significance of the animals in the *Punica*, be they in narrative, simile or ekphrasis,[45] and it is clearly one of the more basic implications here. Capua is the weak, feminised,[46] hunted prey of, set in

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[39] Ahl-Davis-Pomeroy (1986) 2525. Cf. Kißel (1979) 121.

[40] Verg. *A.* 9.59-64, as noted by Spaltenstein (1986) 452 *ad loc.* and Küppers (1986) 125-7, who further compares Hannibal's actions outside Saguntum at 1.298-9. If Horsfall (1974) is right that Turnus' riding up and down evokes Hannibal's similar actions outside Rome, then Silius demonstrates his recognition of this and translates the legendary back into the historical.

[41] Verg. *A.* 9.565-6. Hardie (1994: 180 *ad loc.*) merely notes that it is 'odd that the name of Turnus' victim means 'wolf'', while O'Hara (1996) 220 disappointingly misreads the simile as comparing Lycus to the wolf.

[42] Ahl-Davis-Pomeroy (1986) 2525-6 suggestively contrasts the efficacy of Fabius' shepherding with the Aeneas of *Aeneid* 2's tendency as shepherd to stand and stare before becoming a wolf, 'marauders in a city no longer their own.'

[43] The Romans are *Martia plebes* at 8.269. The confusion of Roman and Carthaginian as categories is pervasive throughout the poem, on which see McGuire (1997) 126-44.

[44] Speed: Pl. *Poen.* 530, Lucr. 6.765; timidity: Hor. *Carm.* 1.2.12, Luc. 4.437.

[45] Narrative, or rather characters' 'back-story': Mopsus, the Cretan hunter resident in Saguntum at 2.93-9; the Spanish hunter Aconteus, whose name sets him out as thrower of javelins (already at Callim. *Aet.* fr. 70.1-2, Verg. *A.* 11.612-3 with O'Hara (1996) 32, 231, 292) faster than deer at 16.562-6. Simile: the Gaetulians in the African catalogue at 3.294-7, curiously echoing Aeneas' pursuit of Turnus at Verg. *A.* 12.749-55. Ekphrasis: the Arcadian deer on the temple of Hercules at Gades: 3.32-9.

[46] The choice of *cerua* – often of indeterminate gender (*OLD* s.v.) but here clearly feminine (*quae* 13.116, *hanc* 117, *haec* 126) – against the Virgilian *ceruus,* but in line with Livy's Sentinum omen, may be significant. However, the parallel with

antithesis to the lupine Romans. That the deer does on some level stand for Capua is made clear by the details of its history. It was found by Capys at the very time when he was ploughing the *sulcus primigenius*, a pastoral element juxtaposed against the urban foundation and the agricultural overtones of the furrow. It is thus akin, if not precisely analogous, to those animals which lead colonists to the divinely appointed site for the new foundation.[47] It also relates closely to the white sow which Helenus and Tiberinus predict will mark for Aeneas the site of Rome, and which he duly finds and sacrifices.[48] Both are remarkable for their whiteness, a whiteness which Virgil uses to connect his transformed, almost Roman sow back to the traditional version, whereby the sow represented not Rome, but Alba Longa.[49] The interrelation of hart and Capua is not only analogous to this, but intertextual with it. The parallel with the sow, and especially with the Roman wolf, may be closer still if there is any truth to Heurgon's (1942: 324-6) speculation that Silius' description draws on a Capuan tradition whereby Telephus was suckled by a deer and went on to found Capua. He provides as evidence a Capuan *uncia* from the Second Punic War showing on one side Hercules, on the other a deer suckling a child, which he believes was designed to imitate and rival Roman coinage showing the wolf and twins.[50] Telephus, as he notes, was raised by a deer and linked by various sources with Italy, so that he was an obvious choice as *ktistes*.[51] Beyond this, there is no evidence for this attractive hypothesis, and in any case, as Heurgon himself notes, Silius does not follow the 'tradition', since he makes Capys the founder and has him tame rather than be suckled by the hart. However, whether Heurgon is right and Silius is obliquely alluding to this rival Capuan tradition, or it is simply that the resonances of the episode suggest such a theory in the great scholar's mind, the hart clearly not only represents Capua, but represents it in a way which sets it in clear opposition to Rome. As elsewhere, it echoes Alba as the other of Rome, the twin-town, the city which resembles its Trojan kin but must be subordinated to it.[52]

The parallel is further reinforced by the hart's longevity.[53] That the deer is coaeval with the city is extremely suggestive of its symbolic nature. It is intimately connected with Capys, with the Trojan origins of the city, all of which further add to the parallelism with Rome, which will so soon be embodied in the savage wolves. Heurgon argues for the significance of the millennium as the lifespan of a city and, though his parallels are unconvincing.[54] More persuasively, Feeney has shown how the period of the millennium was exploited, first by Greeks who depicted Alexander's invasion of Asia as a re-enactment of the fall of Troy, which was conveniently dated to 1134 B.C., a thousand years earlier, and then by Ennius, if indeed he planned his *Annales* to span for a thousand years from his date for the fall, 1184, to Cato's censorship and Fulvius Nobilior's dedication of the temple of

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the *lupa* as nurse of the founder may be the point here.

[47] For numerous examples of this motif, see Leigh (1998) 91-2, 96-7. The cow which led Cadmus to the site of Thebes is perhaps the most famous.

[48] Verg. *A*. 3.388-93, 8.42-5, 81-5. On the sow and Alba, often with explicit etymologising, see e.g. Fab. Pict. fr. 4 Peter, Prop. 4.1.35. Further references and discussion at Ogilvie (1965) 43 *ad* Liv. 1.3.2 (though Livy does not mention the omen.)

[49] *alba solo recubans, albi circum ubera nati,* 3.392 = 8.45. At 8.82, she is *candida per siluam cum fetu concolor albo*, which Silius may echo with *candore*, while the epanalepsis recalls that of *alba* in the prophetic passages. On Virgil's etymologising, see O'Hara (1996) 201.

[50] Sambon (1903) nr. 1045.

[51] Telephus raised by a deer: Apollod. 2.7.4, 3.9.4, Diod. 4.33.11, Paus. 8.48.7; father of Tyrsenus and Tarchon: Lycophr. 1247-8; father of Rhome, father-in-law of Aeneas or Ascanius: Plut. *Rom.* 1. Interesting details which Heurgon does not mention – and which are not strictly relevant to his mythopoeic hypothesis but are to a reader of Virgil and Silius – are that Telephus, like Evander, was Arcadian, and that he was the adopted heir of King Teuthras of Mysia. If Heurgon is correct, there may be an erudite justification for Silius' choice of name for his bard (11.288, 433, 482).

[52] See, for example, Virrius' *a fortiori* argument at Liv. 26.13.16, and in general, Piccaluga (1983-4).

[53] On the traditional longevity of deer, Theophr. *apud* Cic. *Tusc*. 3.69, Ov. *Met*. 7.273, *Eleg*. *Maec*. 1.115, Juv. 14.251.

[54] Heurgon (1942) 324. Feeney (2007: 276 n47) mentions a prophecy in Dio (57.18.3-5) in which Rome would stand for 900 years.

Hercules Musarum.[55] Capua's foundation also dates back to around the period of the Trojan War. Was there a chronographer who dated the fall to 1216 B.C.? Or should we take the bard Teuthras' genealogy of Capys – Anchises' father rather than Aeneas' companion – as meaning that Capua was founded a generation or two before the fall, and hence before the foundation of Alba Longa? In either case, the Trojan credentials of both sides create massive tension between the two possible exploitations of the millennium: is this an Alexander style re-enactment by the Romans sacking Trojan Capua, or an Ennian reversal whereby the Trojan Romans get to do the sacking for a change? The third alternative, of course, is that these polarities collapse in on each other as Trojan sacks Trojan in the paradox that is the victorious defeat of civil war.

This great expanse of time ends as if it were a single day. Silius poignantly, even harshly, juxtaposes the thousand years of the hart's life with the metaphor of death as night coming upon it.[56] The symbolism moves from the hart to the city and back to mortal creatures, the death of the hart symbolises the destruction of the city, which in turn evokes the death of a man. This parallelism will reach its climax with the final episode of the Capuan narrative, the suicide of Taurea, symbolising the self-destruction of Capua. Expectations are thus established about the destruction of the city, expectations which will be disappointed but which serve to colour the whole narrative as parallel to the sacks of the cities it symbolises.

Before continuing our examination of the hart as symbol of Capua, let us also note its other rôles, those of pet, of divinity and of talisman. The excessive care lavished by Silvia upon the Virgilian deer has been interpreted by Vance as a disturbing blurring of the boundaries between wildness and domesticity, the decoration of its defensive antlers with soft garlands, the washing and grooming representing a perverted preparation for marriage or sacrifice, while simultaneously allowing a dangerous quantity of feral freedom to remain.[57] Such a liminal state is not the problem with the Capuan hart. It is only when compelled by hostile, external forces that she leaves the domestication of the city for the wildness of the country, and death. Rather, she has become too domesticated, Capys has softened her – *mollitus* – had the effect which Capua always has upon the wild and hardy. Hart, like city, is a soft, *mollis* creature, whose grooming and bathing, inherited from her Virgilian ancestor, gains that added touch of cultured decadence from the comb's being gilded.[58] Such a creature could not stand against the untamed power of the wolf, of Rome.

The deer was now the *numen* of the place, effectively a substitute for Diana,[59] whose servant the people believe her to be, and they gave her incense as one would to the gods.[60] The deer thus has another, parallel – and by strict logic incompatible – rôle as divinity and talisman of Capua, which co-exists with that of symbol and surrogate. As such she

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[55] Feeney (2007) 142-5, building on Gratwick (1982) for the argument about Ennius.

[56] *nox* is death (*OLD* s.v. 1g) also at 2.574, where it is *suprema*, and 9.45, accompanied by *Stygia…umbra*, though surely not at 6.33, *pace* the elaborate argument at Spaltenstein (1986) 392 *ad loc.*; Bruttius has about ten minutes and seven lines still to live. The image is common but always qualified with an adjective to make its meaning clear: *aeterna,* Catul. 5.6, Verg. *A.* 10.746, Ov. *Ep.* 10.112; *longa,* Hor. *Carm.* 4.9.28. The baldness – and hence boldness – of the noun here emphasises the paradox and the poignancy of the end of the day coming at the end of a thousand years. Spaltenstein (1990) 215 *ad loc.* is much exercised over *aeuo* but does not register the *figura etymologica* on *longaeuus.*

[57] Vance (1981) esp. 127-8. Horsfall (2000: 326 *ad* 7.483) usefully cites Theophr. *Char.* 21.9 and others on excessive devotion to animals, the sequence of epigrams at *AP* 7.189-216 on pets and (*op. cit.* 328 *ad* 7.488) evidence literary, artistic and scholarly for 'pet-adoring reality'.

[58] 13.122-3. Spaltenstein (1990) 214 *ad loc.* sees it simply as 'une imagination noble' as opposed to a religious rite, though he does incidentally describe the detail as 'ce luxe'.

[59] Diana was closely linked with Capua by her sanctuary on Mt. Tifata, on which see *ILS* 6306, Heurgon (1942) 299-39. The shrine's centrality to civic identity may be suggested by Fredriksen (1984) 118: 'Organised life in Capua began in the ninth century b.c., and seems to have concentrated at first round the shrine of Diana Tifatina.'

[60] On deer linked with gods, see *RE* VIII.1945.41ff. s.v. Hirsch.

guarantees the safety of the city while she remains within its walls.[61] Such a rôle is widely paralleled, though more frequently for inanimate objects, such as statues.[62] Examples at Rome, the so-called *signa imperii*, included the ancilia dropped from heaven into the hands of Numa and kept by the Salii,[63] and perhaps most famously the Palladium, which was the subject of an important episode in the *Punica* directly preceding this.[64] Heurgon takes this a stage further in his view that Silius is adopting an existing tradition, and that the hart represents what anthropologists would term 'l'âme extérieure' of the city, an object upon which its vitality is projected, like the Ruminal at Rome.[65] Capua is once more the inverse of Rome, doomed by the loss of its talisman just as the other Trojan city is protected by hers.

Yet the divine quality of the deer adds another element, since there is a sense of the city's being deserted by the gods, a sure sign of its demise. As Aeschylus' Eteocles says, ἀλλ' οὖν θεοὺς | τοὺς τῆς ἁλούσης πόλεος ἐκλείπειν λόγος (*Sept.* 216-8). The idea was widespread, and had particular resonance in Flavian Rome, whose reigning dynasty's defining military victory was over Jerusalem, which they believed had been abandoned in just such a manner.[66] There are echoes too of the related Roman rite of *euocatio*, in which Rome would persuade a city's guardian deity to transfer its home and allegiance to her, as Camillus did before the capture of one of Capua's interurbes, Veii.[67] Though the hart does not willingly abandon the city – nor does she in any but the most literal way go over to Rome – nevertheless Capua is deprived of her tutelary deity and Fulvius does – albeit in a different manner – appropriate that deity's power for use against her. Just as the gods of Rome were ranged in her defence (12.706-25), so Capua's is chased from her walls.

That appropriation takes the form of Fulvius' sacrifice of the hart to Diana, a most welcome offering to her. How are we to understand the goddess' pleasure at this sacrifice of what was believed to be her servant?[68] Franchet d'Esperey notes that the goddess of the wood's aspects could include protectress and huntress, so that sacrifices of deer were acceptable to her, and indeed were made at Capua, as shown by epigraphic evidence.[69] This, however, does not explain why she should accept the sacrifice of the precise hart which was sacred to her. Two explanations, by no means mutually exclusive, present themselves. The detail that the Capuans *credebant* her a servant of Diana may be significant, stressed as it is by enjambment. Silius may be suggesting that they were misled, their beliefs unfounded. Certainly mortals' ability to understand the workings of the divine is severely limited. The

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[61] It is tempting – but probably misguided – to note that *cerui* can also be the defensive structure known as the *cheveaux-de-frise* (*OLD* s.v. 2, *TLL* III.954.69ff s.v. II.B *munimenti genus* Var. *L.* 5.117, Serv. *ad* Verg. *E.* 2.29, Caes, *Gal.* 7.72.4, Liv. 44.11.4), which Silius describes and compares to deer's horns, but avoids naming, perhaps with etymological intent at 10.409-14.

[62] On the subject, see Faraone (1992). The only living talismans which come to mind are the ravens of the Tower of London. Franchet d'Esperey (1977: 166) agrees: 'ce rôle n'est dévolu jamais à un animal.' Unless they derive from a common tradition, Silius' hart must owe something to the story of Sertorius' prophetic white doe (Plut. *Sert.* 11.3-4, 20.1-5, Gel. 15.22.4, both of which Konrad (1994: 123-4 *ad* Plut. *Sert.* 11.3-4) believes derive from Sallust's *Histories*; V. Max. 1.2.4, Front. *Str.* 1.11.3, Plin. *Nat.* 8.117) which he used to impress and manipulate the Spaniards. On the incident when she was lost, App. *B Civ.* 1.13.110 portrays Sertorius as himself believing in the doe's numinous quality, and fearing the consequences of its loss. The specifically prophetic nature of the deer, which Silius' does not share, recurs with Phrixus' deer at V.Fl. 6.70.

[63] Enn. *Ann.* 114 Sk., Ov. *Fast.* 3.357-92, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.70, Plut. *Num.* 13.

[64] Franchet d'Esperey (1977: 166) notes that the Palladium is another example of the so-called 'âme extérieure', but fails to observe that Silius has juxtaposed the Dasius episode directly next to the omen of the hart.

[65] Heurgon (1942) 321-6 esp. 323, followed by Franchet d'Esperey (1977: 165), who usefully notes the parallel of Meleager's log.

[66] Tac. *Hist.* 5.13.1. For the belief in general, see Pelling (1988) 303 *ad* Plut. *Ant.* 75.4-5.

[67] Liv. 5.21, with a discussion of the ritual by Ogilvie (1965) 673-5 *ad loc.* On the *euocatio* of Juno from Carthage, which must also resonate here, see *ibid* 674-5.

[68] The possibility that *gratissima* is focalised through Fulvius, or even predicative, 'in the hope/belief that it would be most welcome' must be removed by the narrator's apostrophe of Diana, emphasised by the epanalepsis of *tibi*, as if briefly composing a prayer himself in best *Du-Stil*.

[69] Franchet d'Esperey (1977) 166, quoting *CIL* X.3796.

fallibility of omens, or at least of their interpretation, is well attested in epic.[70] Before the battle of Ticinus, a hawk chases a flock of doves and kills fifteen of them, before being chased away by an eagle, after which the one remaining dove pecks Scipio's helmet.[71] The seer Liger predicts – rather obviously, the reader might think – sixteen years of war against Rome before Scipio defeats Carthage. By contrast, Bogus – a wonderful linguistic coincidence, as Duff with unwonted humour notes – wrongly predicts defeat for the Romans and, like Tolumnius, throws the first spear of battle.[72] The omen here is all too clear and all too correctly interpreted, but perhaps it is the previous favour of Diana which was misconstrued. Both hart and city, indeed hart as city, are very acceptable sacrifices to her.

A related alternative is the changing favour of the god, hitherto propitious but now hostile, happy to witness the destruction of her servant and her city.[73] This is in marked contrast with the catastrophic vengeance which Valerius Flaccus' Cybele takes upon Cyzicus for killing her lion,[74] as indeed with Artemis' punishment of Agamemnon. Despite the detail of the sacrifice's being *gratissima* to her, the narrative expectation of divine vengeance is still created. Yet, as with so much in this narrative, it will be disappointed. Capua will be taken, Fulvius will not be punished, and Pan, who wreaks Cybele's vengeance in Valerius, will have the opposite effect of imposing calm.[75]

3. *Claudius ad portas*

The siege begins. The transition from the incident of the hart is made as Capua takes on the qualities of the animal which represented it. Allegory becomes narrative expressed through metaphor and simile, as the Romans, like hunters, surround the deer-like Capua with weapons just like a cordon (*in morem indaginis*, 13.141), while the inhabitants are fearful (*dum pauitant*, 142), like the *pauida fuga* (133-4) of the *cerua*.[76] The first incident, in true epic style, is a single combat.[77] The Capuan Cerrinus Vibellius Taurea, immensely skilled with the spear, challenges the Roman co-commander Claudius Asellus to a duel, which the latter accepts. They exchange spear throws but, when the Roman's pierces his opponent's shield but not his body, he chases the fleeing Capuan with drawn sword, riding right through the city and out the other side (13.142-78). The broad outlines of the story are already present in Livy, though he places the episode four years earlier in 215 b.c., and his duel is, if anything, yet more anticlimactic.[78] The duel has elements of the gladiatorial spectacle, though these are more prominent in Livy.[79] It also sets up an opposition between the discipline of the Roman and the passionate, arrogant, ungoverned force of the Capuan,[80]

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[70] O'Hara (1990). Examples in the *Aeneid* include the death of Laocoön (2.199-227), misinterpreted (228-33), and Juturna's false omen, plausibly but by definition erroneously interpreted by Tolumnius (12.244-65)

[71] 4.101-19. On the difficulty of interpreting omens in the poem, see Kiβel (1979) 19-20.

[72] Liger: 4.120-30; Bogus: 4.131-42. The latter's prophetic incompetence is later his death at 5.401-9 when he falls – first again – in battle, having been misled by bird-omens into expecting grandchildren.

[73] The echo is not strong, but Metabus devotes Camilla as *famulam* to the *Latonia uirgo* at Verg. *A*. 11.557-60. Diana's vengeance on Arruns is in contrast with her contentment here.

[74] Death of lion: V.Fl. 3.20-6; vengeance: 3.32-248.

[75] See §7 below.

[76] Cf. Ruperti (1795) *ad* 13.138ff: 'tam arte Capuam obsidet, ut uenator saltus ac ferarum latibula *indagine*, h.e. ingenti retium cassiumque serie, ne ulla elabendi occasio detur.'

[77] However, on the persistence of actual single combat in the Republican period, see Oakley (1985).

[78] Liv. 23.46.12-47.8. He sceptically reports the mention of the ride through the city in *quidam annales*. On Silius' divergences from Livy and especially his disregard for chronology throughout the whole siege narrative, see Burck (1984b) 32-5, 39-40. App. *Hann*. 37.161 also mentions the incident, in terms closer to those if Silius, and Gaillard (1998) 76-7 n.240 *ad loc*. dates it, *pace* Livy, to 212.

[79] *Romani ad spectaculum pugnae eius frequentes exierant, et Campani non uallum modo castrorum sed moenia etiam urbis prospectantes repleuerunt*. Liv. 23.47.3.

[80] 13.162-6, on which more below. 'Der spontanen, leicht überheblichen Herausforderung des Taurea stellt Silius die

though the polarity is collapsed as Taurea in fear flees from the raging, bloodthirsty Claudius (13.172-4):

nam profugo rapidus fusis instabat habenis,
utque metus uictum, sic ira et gloria portis
uictorem immisit meritique cupido cruoris.

There are echoes here of the wolves chasing the deer, but also of the pursuit of Turnus by Aeneas, and it is this aspect of the episode upon which I wish to concentrate.

The whole siege of Capua is a nexus of associations with other sieges, but it particularly evokes that of the Trojan camp by the Latins in *Aeneid* 9.[81] Here Silius has transposed an incident whose climax has close parallels with Turnus' escape from the Trojan camp into a context generally reminiscent of his assault on that same camp.[82] Does Silius then portray Claudius as Turnus, the Romans as the Latins, and if he does, what are the implications for our reading of the siege? The text seems wilfully to confuse the issue. When Claudius responds to the challenge, he is termed *Aeneadae*.[83] The patronymic is used very frequently in the plural of the Romans – twenty-four times in all – and always, as we have seen, with meaning, drawing the link back to the Trojan, the Virgilian origins of the *gens Romana*.[84] In the singular, however, it is only used once elsewhere in the *Punica*, later in the same book, of Scipio during the *nekuia* when he is not only a Roman descendant of the Trojan, but a textual descendant of the Virgilian Aeneas in the underworld (13.767). Claudius too is not merely a genetic but a textual descendant of Virgil's Aeneas a millennium after he chased Turnus, a century after he was composed chasing Turnus.

Yet the echoes of the duel in *Aeneid* 12 are confused by others of Turnus' *aristeia* in book 9. Even before we reach the coincidence of the lone dash through the city, Claudius is twice called *Rutulus* within ten lines, and that within ten more of being strongly signalled as a Trojan (13.164, 171). In this case, Claudius is the only person in the whole poem to be so described in the singular, though the plural is widely applied to Saguntines, Romans, and even Rutulians. This term must evoke Virgil's Turnus who is referred to six times by the simple ethnic noun *Rutulus*.[85] However, it refers more closely to one particular appearance of Turnus, which we have already examined in its capacity as an example of a wolf simile; the moment when he scans the walls of the camp for a way in (Verg. *A.* 9.65-8):

haud aliter Rutulo muros et castra tuenti
ignescunt irae, duris dolor ossibus ardet.
qua temptet ratione aditus, et quae uia clausos
excutiat Teucros uallo atque effundat in aequum?

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disziplinierte Haltung des Claudius entgegen.' Burck (1984b) 40.

[81] This itself is a failed replay of the siege of Troy, or rather a struggle to decide whether the Trojan camp will fall like Troy or take Latinus' city like the Greek camp, on which see Anderson (1957) 24-5, Knauer (1964) 270-80, Quint (1992) 67, Hardie (1994) 10-1.

[82] Verg. *A.* 9.722-815. Burck (1984b: 41) notes the echo, but gives Silius no credit for the selection and transposition. However, Spaltenstein (1990) 218 *ad* 13.175 thinks the episode too close to Livy and too little developed for Silius to have thought of Turnus' escape.

[83] 13.153. The only other instances of the singular extant before Prudentius are at Ov. *Met.* 15.804 and *Pont.* 1.1.35. Each is pointed and marks the person so named as not merely a descendant but a type of Aeneas. For the former explains Venus' concern for Julius Caesar, who is about to be assassinated, and her decision to hide him in a cloud as her Homeric self had Aeneas. The latter is part of a comparison between Aeneas carrying Anchises and Ovid's book-roll 'bearing' Augustus.

[84] 'So heißen die Römer zu Beginn des Werkes, und dies entspricht natürlich nicht bloßem Streben nach *uariatio*…die Söhne Romas…sind vielmehr sämtlich Nachfolger des vergilischen *uir* des Aeneas.' von Albrecht (1964) 177.

[85] Verg. *A.* 7.409, 8.474, 9.65, 442, 10.108, 232. Juv. 1.162-3 picks up the prevalence of the usage: *securus licet Aenean Rutulumque ferocem | committas.*

Turnus resembles the wolf in its rage and its attempts to find a way in. Claudius, however, is unlike the raging Taurea, but still resembles his fellow Rutulian in his assessment of points of access (13.163-5):

> *at non idem animus Rutulo: speculatur et omni*
> *corpore perlustrat qua sit certissima ferro*
> *in uulnus uia*

The presence of the dative *Rutulo*, the echo of *haud aliter* in *at non idem animus*, the search for a way in, the one to the camp, the other to Taurea's body, are clear indications that the text is drawing parallels between Claudius and Turnus. Behind both passages stands the Homeric Achilles scanning for the best way to pierce Hector's body.[86] Silius thus registers Virgil's adaptation of the Homeric lines by echoing but also re-adapting them to the original context. He further suggests – or acknowledges Virgil's suggestion – that Hector stands for the city of Troy, and appropriates this motif to have Taurea stand for Capua. Yet this leaves Claudius in the rôle of both Turnus and Achilles. How are we to read this parallelism, especially when the Roman has so recently and emphatically been signalled as an Aeneas figure?

One cannot impose a monolithic interpretation upon a text of such wilfully complex intertextuality, but – to maintain the more apt weaving metaphor, rather than that from sculpture – certain strands may be teased out. Silius, as commentator on Virgil, is demonstrating the collapse of the opposition set up between Aeneas and Turnus, and just as they jostle for the rôles of Hector and Achilles, Aeneas and Diomedes even, so Silius' characters replay their contest by jostling for *their* rôles. One might also take the blending of Trojan and Italian personae as a signal that the mingling of the races promised in Jupiter's reconciliation of Juno has come to pass. However, that mingling has reached a point where, instead of Trojan against Italian, we have two cities, both of which are both Trojan and Italian, fighting each other, replaying the conflicts of the *Aeneid*. Thus, the text is not only a commentary. It demands that we use its intertexts to comment on and interpret its own meaning also. The Roman siege of Capua is tainted by the echoes of another siege of a Trojan fortification. Finally, the echo of Turnus' perusal of the walls – and of Achilles' of Hector qua Troy – in Claudius' perusal of Taurea's body sets up the parallelism whereby the Capuan comes to stand for his city, his suicide for its self-destruction.[87]

The *Zweikampf* of Taurea and Claudius, for all these resonances, is a narrative dead end. It ends – or rather stops – abruptly, bathetically,[88] and despite its tenuous causal connection with what follows,[89] this abrupt, bathetic full stop draws attention to its futility, its status as a self-contained episode contributing nothing to the advance of the narrative, as a solipsistic action contributing nothing to the prosecution or raising of the siege. This fractured, anticlimactic narrative will prove typical of the siege, as Capua always feigns and threatens to be the typical *urbs capta*, but always veers away, leaving the reader to question the nature, symbolism, and significance of both city and narrative. The next episode is, if anything, a clearer example of this narrative strategy.

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[86] Hom. *Il.* 22.319-21, noted by Juhnke (1972) 401. *quae uia* and *qua* each correspond to the Homeric ὅπῃ but only Silius picks up μάλιστα with *certissima*.
[87] See 9 below.
[88] Burck (1984b) 41.
[89] Claudius' ride does inspire in the Roman troops a greater passion to take the city, as signalled by *hinc* (13.179, with Spaltenstein (1990) 218 *ad loc.*), but neither cause nor effect is of great significance.

4. Three become one

As Claudius disappears simultaneously and mimetically from the city and the narrative, the Romans begin to enter the expected mode of city-sacking: they no longer need commands or encouragement from their commander, Fulvius; each takes to his task with alacrity.[90] The responsibility removed, Fulvius is free to pursue personal glory – and the rôle of Turnus – with a charge at the city gate. The gate, however, is guarded by a set of triplets (13.191-3):

> *tres claustra aequaeuo seruabant corpore fratres,*
> *quis delecta manus centeni cuique ferebant*
> *excubias unaque locum statione tenebant*

These brothers, unsurprisingly absent from the historiographical sources, play a very small part in the narrative, but have an extremely complex intertextual and symbolic rôle. Most obviously, in the context of a replay of Turnus' assault on the Trojan camp, they recall the gigantic twins, Bitias and Pandarus, who likewise guarded the gate and were likewise killed by the leader of the enemy assault.[91] In basic terms, Silius indulges in some mild *aemulatio*, trumping Virgil's twins with triplets, and further aligns, whether directly or contrastively, the Capuans with the Trojans, the Romans with the Latins.[92] His manipulation of Virgil, and other texts, in this passage is not, however, basic.

Silius demonstrates his comprehension of the gigantomachic colouring of the Virgilian episode. The gigantic Bitias and Pandarus are like the Giants who attacked Olympus and Turnus' killing of them recalls Jupiter wielding the thunderbolt.[93] The implications of this are already complex, since the Trojans are defending a position, unlike the Giants storming heaven; Turnus is not only in the precisely opposite situation, but will be imagistically equated with a felled giant in his final duel with Aeneas.[94] Silius' triplets are not giants,[95] but they are, by virtue of their number, compared to the three-bodied monster Geryon (13.200-5):[96]

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[90] *laetatur non hortandi, non plura monendi | Fuluius esse locum. rapiunt sibi quisque laborem.* 13.186-7.

[91] Verg. *A.* 9.672-755, noted by Burck (1984b) 41. Spaltenstein (1990: 219 *ad* 13.191) notes the echo in the hundred men commanded by each triplet, of the twice seven Rutulians who watch the walls of the Trojan camp with a hundred men each at 9.161-2. Since this in turn echoes and competitively amplifies the seven watch commanders – yet again with a hundred men each – guarding the Greek camp at Hom. *Il.* 9.85-6, Silius' confusion of the categories besieger/besieged, attacker/defender, friend/foe is already present in one of the objects of his 'combinatorial imitation' (the term from Hardie (1989) 3). One additional detail which further flags the intertext – and again reverses rôles – is the similarity of the immediately preceding episodes. The galvanising effect which Apollo's epiphany to Ascanius has on the besieged Trojans resembles that of Claudius' adventure on the besieging Romans, each resulting in a frenzy of bombardment (Verg. *A.* 9.659-71 ~ *Pun.* 13.179-85).

[92] Macrobius (6.2.32) claims that Virgil derives the episode of Bitias and Pandarus from Ennius' *Annales* 15 (fr. iv Skutsch) in which two Istrians burst forth from the siege of Ambracia; both passages look back to the defence of the Greek camp by Polypoites and Leonteus at Hom. *Il.* 12.127-94. With each imitation, there is an interesting series of inversions of success and ethnicity: Homer's victorious Greeks beat back the Trojans, while Ennius' Greek allies are in a lost cause; Virgil's Trojans (playing the role of Greeks to Turnus' Hector) are on the (eventually) victorious side. This allows Silius the ambiguity of Trojans fighting Trojans in a lost cause.

[93] For a full discussion of the imagery and its significance, see Hardie (1986) 143-6, (1994) 213-34 *ad loc.*

[94] Hardie (1986) 147-54.

[95] It is tempting to sense – reading synchronically with knowledge of the Geryon simile and associated imagery to come – a punning allusion to the hundred arms of the giant Briareus/Aegaeon in *delecta manus centeni*, 13.192, perhaps echoing *Aegaeon qualis, centum cui bracchia dicunt | centenasque manus* at Verg. *A.* 10.565-6. There is a more straightforward, though still implicit, allusion during Thiodamas' slaughter of the sleeping Thebans at Stat. *Theb.* 10.293-4: *optet nunc bracchia centum | centenasque in bella manus.*

[96] On Geryon – first mentioned at Hes. *Theog.* 287-94, where he is only three-headed – see *RE* VII.1286.43ff., Roscher I.ii.1630.9ff. His three bodies are mentioned at Stesich. fr. 6 Bergk, Aesch. *Ag.* 870 (where he is τρισώματός, to which Virgil and Silius may be alluding), Apollod. 2.5.10, Hor. *Carm.* 2.14.7. It is interesting that there were several Euhemerist explanations for the three bodies, including one that it represented three brothers, as at Just. *Epit.* 44.4.16. Cf. Diod. Sic. 4.17, Lucian *Toxaris* 62, *Myth Vat.* 1.68. Knowledge of this rationalisation would add wit and *doctrina* to the simile's other

qualis Atlantiaco memoratur litore quondam
monstrum Geryones immane tricorporis irae,
cui tres in pugna dextrae uaria arma gerebant:
una ignes saeuos, ast altera pone sagittas
fundebat, ualidam torquebat tertia cornum,
atque uno diuersa dabat tria uulnera nisu.

The reader has already encountered Geryon earlier in the poem, each time in an aetiological passage relating to Hercules. It was after killing Geryon that the hero founded Saguntum, and on the way so to do that he raped and abandoned Pyrene.[97] Though the labour is a recurrent motif in the poem – not least since it is the principal means of linking Hercules with both Spain and Italy – nevertheless, the mention of the giant surely evokes the *Aeneid*'s two references to him by name: the genealogy of Aventinus, fathered by the Tirynthian again on his way back through Italy from killing Geryon (Verg. *A.* 7.659-63), and especially Evander's story – also an aetiological passage, explaining the origins of the Ara Maxima – of his fight with Cacus (8.193-275). Even were the reader not to make the connection simply from the reference to Geryon, the unexpected description of the Capuan gate makes it unmistakable (13.206-9):

hos ubi non aequis uariantes proelia consul
conspexit telis et portae limina circum
stragem ac perfusos subeuntum sanguine postis,
concitat intortam furiatis uiribus hastam.

Stout defenders of their post the brothers may be, but the hyperbole of a pile of corpses on the threshold of the gate,[98] of gateposts flowing with the blood of attackers[99] evokes the *locus horridus* of the monster's cave more than the gate of the city or camp.[100] Such a *locus horridus* is Cacus' cave, as described by Evander, which reverses the horrors of the Capuan gate in having the ground warm with blood and corpses – or more specifically heads – fixed on the gateposts.[101] Moreover, the bizarre military speciality of one of the brothers, the hurling of sulphurous fire-brands, is suggestive both of Cacus' fire-breathing and the brimstone torches of the Furies.

The explicit comparison with Geryon and the implicit parallelism through intertextuality with the gigantomachic twins and with Cacus all present the Capuan triplets as impious giants defending a monstrous, infernal city against a Herculean figure, a slayer of

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virtues. Apuleius' Lucius also describes his fatigue after killing the three 'robbers' who attacked him (he does not yet know that they were wineskins) as *in uicem Geryoneae caedis fatigatum*. Apul. *Met.* 2.32.18.

[97] Saguntum: 1.276-7; Pyrene: 3.420-6, on whom see ch.2 above. The latter is recalled by the echo of the rare compound *tricorporis*, already latent in the *tres…aequaeuo…corpore fratres* of line 191, which occurs only elsewhere to describe the unnamed Geryon at Verg. *A.* 6.289, for which it was probably coined (Austin (1977) 123 *ad loc.*)

[98] *strages* meaning a pile of corpses (*OLD* s.v. 3b) is usually qualified by an adjective or, most frequently, a genitive such as *corporum*. The absence of such qualification serves to amplify further the hyperbole by hinting at an abstraction of destruction and slaughter (*OLD* s.v. 2).

[99] It is quite probably a coincidence – the collocation is not especially rare – but Mother Earth is *perfusam…sanguine* of her sons the giants after the gigantomachy at Ov. *Met.* 1.157.

[100] Examples of *loci horridi* with gruesome entrances, other than that below, include the caves of Amycus at V.Fl. 4.177-85, and of Virgil's Polyphemus at *A.* 3.625-6 (which Hardie (1986: 115) compares with Cacus'; Galinsky (1966: 31 n32) is more concerned with echoes of the Homeric Cyclops). For another application of such monstrous details to a military context, see *ibid.* 31, 35 on the echoes of the threshold in the depiction of Turnus on the battlefield, part of an attempt to align the latter with Cacus, and hence Hercules with Aeneas.

[101] *semperque recenti | caede tepebat humus, foribusque adfixa superbis | ora uirum tristi pendebant pallida tabo*. Verg. *A.* 8.195-7.

monsters and imposer of order.[102] Yet if Fulvius, killing a Geryon with his spear of yew, is Hercules killing Cacus, then like his paradigm he too is tainted with his victim's *furor*.[103] The parallel is the closer if one accepts Hardie's suggestion that the Salii's praise of Hercules as sacker of cities echoes both his devastation of Cacus' cave and the fall of Troy.[104] Thence, it becomes less surprising – if no less disturbing – that Fulvius is also city-storming, twin-slaying Turnus, killer of giants but also gigantic himself. Were this complication of Silius' Capuans and his Capua not sufficient, another model for the twins must be considered.

The very mention of triplets evokes the legend of the battle between the three Horatii and the three Curiatii to decide the conflict between Rome and Alba.[105] However, the association is more readily made by the reader of the *Punica,* since she has (fairly) recently encountered an episode which clearly models itself on the famous contest of the champions. At the battle of Ticinus, after the death of the Gaul Crixus (4.143-310), there is a conflict between two sets of triplets (4.355-400). The three sons of Xanthippus by a Carthaginian mother, proud of their Greek ancestry and depicted almost as Spartans, are ranged against three Italians from Egeria. The Hannibalic narrative seems to run parallel to that of the regal, as two of the enemy each kills one of the Italians, before the one surviving succeeds in avenging his brothers' death.[106] However, whereas the last Horatius also killed the last Curiatus, the final confrontation between Virbius and Critias lurches suddenly into a replay of the mutual killing of Eteocles and Polynices (4.393-5):[107]

> *et tandem aequatae geminato funere pugnae.*
> *inde alterna uiris transegit pectora mucro,*
> *inque uicem erepta posuerunt proelia uita.*

Silius has taken the old story, in particular the Livian version of it,[108] and emphasised its liminal nature, somewhere between external and civil conflict, between war and fratricide.

Livy's narrative puts constant emphasis on the similarity, even the identity, of the Romans and the Albans,[109] while the very fact of each set of brothers' being twins draws attention to the kinship, even the twinning, of each set with the other,[110] so that the battle becomes a fratricidal one. Livy himself speaks in such terms about the Alban war as a whole,[111] and this reading of the episode was also practised in antiquity as St. Augustine (*C.D.* 3.14) used the fratricidal nature of the Alban war as another stick with which to beat the projected image of pagan Rome. Augustine unpacks all the latent discourse of civil war

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[102] On the chthonic nature of Cacus' cave, see Galinsky (1966) 38-40. For the (relatively) straightforward interpretation of Hercules as a monster-slaying hero and paradigm for Aeneas, see Otis (1964) 334-6, Galinsky (1966), Cairns (1989) 84.
[103] On this aspect of Hercules, see Lyne (1987) 28-32.
[104] Hardie (1986) 111 n.68.
[105] The story, with its sequel of the death of Horatia and her brother's acquittal by *prouocatio,* was almost certainly told by Ennius (*Ann.* fr. 123 Skutsch with discussion 274-6 *ad loc.*; it is alluded to at Prop. 3.3.7) and is extant at Liv. 1.24-6, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 3.13-20. See *RE* VIII.2319.52ff s.v. 2, Dumézil (1942), Ogilvie (1965) 109-17, Deroy (1973), Solodow (1979), Mencacci (1987), Feldherr (1988) 123-31.
[106] Spaltenstein (1986: 299 *ad* 4.391) notes how *trepidos simulanti ducere gressus* elliptically, even cleverly, alludes to Horatius fleeing and thus separating the Curiatii.
[107] Venini (1969b: 780-1) notes the echo of the Theban brothers – which she interprets as an allusion to Statius – in the incident of the Spanish brothers at 16.533-48, but does not mention this passage.
[108] For a defence of Livy's creativity and artistry, to counter the various theories of the episode's mythological origins, see Solodow (1979) esp. 261-8.
[109] Feldherr (1988) 125. One might even read Livy's exceptional statement (1.24.1) that his sources disagree as to which brothers came from which city as a further contribution to his depiction of the sets as almost interchangeable.
[110] Mencacci (1987) 139.
[111] *et bellum utrimque summa ope parabatur, ciuili simillimum bello, prope inter parentes natosque, Troianam utramque prolem, cum Lauinium ab Troia, ab Lauinio Alba, ab Albanorum stirpe regum oriundi Romani essent.* Liv. 1.23.1. Cf. the Roman-Latin battle at Veseris: *fuit autem ciuili maxime bello pugna similis*, Liv. 8.8.2

in the narrative, manipulating his favourite tag from Lucan (*hoc plus quam ciuile bellum fuit*), emphasising the analogous kinship of the brothers and of the cities they represent. He then proceeds to link the battle with the *atrox atque horrendum malum* which was its sequel, the murder of Horatia, stressing their common theme of kin-killing.[112] Silius initially appears to be forging a crude imitation of the Livian episode, losing its significance as an exploration of interstate kinship by casting half-Punic Spartans and Latins, unambiguously foreign to each other, in the rôles of the opposed but related Trojan triplets. However, the sheer emphasis on gemination, and especially the mutual killing of the last pair like the Theban brothers, show how this battle stands for fratricidal civil war, a commentary on Livy, but with the difference that this conflict will not end with the emergence of one from two, but with the annihilation of both. As Hardie describes the episode, in a slightly different context, 'this is one of those mirror combats whose limiting case is the fratricide of civil war, and which forecloses the future through the extirpation of the present generation.'[113]

In addition, Silius further flags the connection with the Livian narrative by incorporating allusions to Alba, but attaching them to the brothers who are fighting for Rome.[114] Thus they come from Aricia at the foot of the Alban Mount. Though one is named Virbius, and is clearly a descendant of the Virgilian son of Hippolytus whom the town also 'sent',[115] the other two have emphatically Alban names. Capys, as we have seen, is listed by Virgil as one of the Alban kings,[116] and has a very important name for establishing parallelism between Capua and Alba. Still more emphatic is the name of the third brother, Albanus, which is not merely an ethnic term but one frequently used by Livy as a collective singular for the people of Alba Longa.[117] Though Silius translates the specific kin-conflict of the descendants of Aeneas onto a universal plane, he retains a degree of colour which maintains the connection with the particular case of Alba, a connection which is of vital importance when the reader next encounters triplets, at Capua.

The Capuan triplets, for all their gigantic colour, are also Alban figures, whose echo of the Curiatii and the Arician brothers further reinforces their association with Capua's fellow Trojan city. Their names evoke the foundations which preceded and were eventually subsumed by the growth of Rome: Numitor, ousted king of Alba Longa, famous brother, and grandfather of still more famous brothers;[118] Laurens is the ethnic adjective to describe the people of Lavinium, and Laurentes is the noun regularly used both of the citizens of Aeneas' foundation and – in the *Aeneid* – of the pre-Trojan Latins.[119] Like the earlier Albanus,

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[112] Solodow (1979: 252-60) shows how verbal echoes underline the parallelism. Feldherr (1988: 135) notes how the potential kinship tie through Horatia 'challenges the radical differentiation between the Alban and Roman champions that was won by the duel.'

[113] Hardie (1993) 97. He goes on to note Silius' subsequent appropriation of Virgil's apostrophe of Nisus and Euryalus, which corresponds to the promise of Ascanius as the triplets do to the young Scipio.

[114] *tergemini*, the incipit of the episode, describing the Spartan brothers, is not especially common in the sense of 'triplets' (*OLD* s.v. 1), and in that sense repeatedly refers to the Horatii and Curiatii (Plin. *Nat*. 7.33, August. *C.D*. 3.14). One wonders, therefore, whether it might not only signal by itself the allusion to the latter, but even hint at the cognomen Trigeminus, adopted by members of the *gens Curiatia*, thus initially aligning the Spartan triplets with the Alban. It is interesting too, in light of Silius later depiction of the Capuan triplets, that tergemini (genitive singular) is used of Geryon at Lucr. 5.28 and Verg. *A*. 8.202.

[115] *quem mater Aricia misit,* Verg. *A*. 7.762 ~ *quos miserat altis | Egeriae genitos immitis Aricia lucis*. Sil. 4.366-7. The etymology of Virbius' name from *uir bis*, with reference to Hippolytus return from the dead (Serv. *ad* Verg. *A*. 7.761, with O'Hara (1996) 198-9) may also account for his second appearance in the epic tradition.

[116] Verg. *A*. 6.768, and see above.

[117] *TLL* I.1485.20ff s.v. *Alba Longa: Albani.* e.g. Liv. 1.22.4. A genuine singular is used of Mettius proposing the duel at 1.23.7.

[118] *RE* XVII.2.1402 s.v. 1; this is the only Numitor mentioned by Roscher III.i.478.42ff. There is also a governor of Cilicia (Juv. 8.92, 7.74; *RE* s.v. 4) and, probably more significantly, a Rutulian at Verg. *A*. 10.342 (*RE* s.v. 2) who attacks Aeneas with a spear pulled from his brother's corpse. Harrison, S.J. (1991: 161-2 *ad loc*.) notes the Italian colouring of the name and the echo of the twins' grandfather. The Etruscan root (numθral) conjectured by Schulze (1904: 200) is probably irrelevant to Silius' Numitor.

[119] Lavinium: *RE* XII.i.1007.25ff; Virgilian Latins: Verg. *A*. 8.371 *et saepissime*.

Laurens stands as a representative for an entire city. There is less, indeed no obvious Alban resonance with the third brother, Taburnus,[120] though his name is unquestionably appropriate, since the geographical location of the mountain flags his Campanian identity, while the mountainous name fits perfectly a figure who *praestabat…membrorum mole*. Yet the brothers' Alban colouring is suffused with a Roman tinge, as Numitor evokes his Roman descendants as much as his Alban self, while Laurens, as adjective and noun, is frequently used by Silius to describe the Romans.[121] As with the whole of the fall of Capua, the fall of Alba is ceaselessly evoked but also the fall of Rome.

Like the other episodes during the siege, like the siege itself and like the fall of Alba, a defeated city that was not sacked, there is a sense of anticlimax, a fractured, incomplete feeling to the narrative. When Fulvius kills Numitor, we do not hear what happens to the other brothers, as the focus switches instantly to Virrius, who supplements the triplets' re-play of Bitias and Pandarus by over-confidently opening the gates to the enemy (13.213-8). So abrupt is the end of the episode, that Spaltenstein has tentatively proposed a lacuna after line 212. One explanation for the failure to account for the deaths of the other two must be the parallelism with Geryon and the suggestion through silence that the triplets formed such a single unit that, like the giant, the death of one body entailed the death of all three. More generally, however, it contitutes another mimesis of the anticlimactic nature of the siege by its abrupt stop.

5. *urbs trunca*

Two further skirmishes take place, each subtly adding to the evocation of the Trojan camp and Alba Longa. A wild man, Calenus, whom Diana's home of Tifata raised, follows the reckless Virrius, wearing no armour. His astonishing feats of strength and audacity make him potentially another monster, but he has also – when, for example, he enters the lion's den and struggles with a bull – something of the Hercules about him.[122] His 'echten Aristie'[123] climaxes with his very epic killing of Scipio's boyhood friend Marius with a rock.[124] Scipio's desire for vengeance evokes that of Achilles and Aeneas, but the pervasive *Aeneid* 9 colouring and the swiftness of the revenge most strongly suggest Nisus' avenging Euryalus.[125] The – by now expected – abrupt ending of the episode here consists of an elaborate simile comparing the speed of the spear to that of a Liburnian galley. It is not, however, as abrupt as all that. For the manner in which the ship achieves 'coverage', the travelling of one's own length in one stroke, *uno…ictu*, recalls the manner in which Turnus

[120] *Taburnus* is the excellent, universally accepted conjecture of Heinsius for MS *Laburnus*. Little is to be said in defence of the paradosis, unless perhaps one accepts the eccentric but intriguing suggestion of Paschalis (1997: 237-8) that Virgil's list of the Alban kings at *A.* 6.760-76 is selected to play on the semantic links between their names (including Capys and Numitor) and those of trees. If – and I stress that 'if' – there is any basis to this theory, then Laurens (derived explicitly from *laurus* at Verg. *A.* 7.59-63) would fit the pattern, as, perhaps, would a figure named after the laburnum tree (Plin. *Nat.* 16.73). The otherwise tempting *Tīburnus* is, of course, excluded by metre.

[121] 1.109-10 and *passim*.

[122] Monster: 'Sil. présente plusieurs monstres et ce Calenus a quelque chose de ce caractère.' Spaltenstein (1986) 221 *ad* 13.220; Hercules: *subsidere saepe leonem, | nudus inire caput pugnas, certare iuuenco | atque obliqua trucis deducere cornua tauri | adsuerat crudoque aliqua se attollere facto*. 13.221-4. Burck (1984b) 42 adds Theseus, who was also a civilising killer of monsters, according to some sources, self-conciously imitating Hercules: ἔπραττε δὲ ταῦτα μιμούμενος τὸν Ἡρακλέα, Plut. *Thes.* 11.1.

[123] Burck (1984b) 42.

[124] 13.230-2. Unless he is lurking in one of Silius' sources lost to us, Marius is an invented figure, as is his namesake at Cannae (9.241): *RE* XIV.2.1810.3ff s.v. 1.

[125] So Burck (1984b) 42-3, though I find strained his suggestion that the double simile of the spear flying like a bird and like a ship echoes the double simile of Euryalus' head like a flower touched by a plough or weighed down by the rain. At the risk of offering an equally strained parallel, it is notable that the two battles of triplets, here and at Ticinus, are each followed by an echo of the Nisus and Euryalus episode, the avenging friend here, the apostrophe in book four.

beheaded Lynceus, a fate shared by the next unfortunate Capuan, Ascanius.

The Roman Volesus decapitates the Capuan Ascanius as he is fleeing towards the city (13.244-8):[126]

> *Ascanium Volesus, proiectis ocius armis*
> *quo leuior peteret muros, per aperta uolantem*
> *adsequitur planta. deiectum protinus ense*
> *ante pedes domini iacuit caput; ipse secutus*
> *corruit ulterior procursus impete truncus.*

This, as we have seen, closely echoes Turnus' killing of Lynceus, who, by contrast, was already inside the camp and turning to face the intruder (Verg. *A.* 9.768-71):

> *Lyncea tendentem contra sociosque uocantem*
> *uibranti gladio conixus ab aggere dexter*
> *occupat, huic uno deiectum comminus ictu*
> *cum galea longe iacuit caput.*

Silius' placement of *iacuit caput* in the same sedes underlines the echo, but in place of Virgil's strong pause at the bucolic diaeresis, marking the move in Turnus' and the reader's attention towards his next victim, here there is a – metrically and narratively – unexpected sequel. Instead of falling dead, Ascanius is carried forward by his momentum, running on headless. What is the reader to make of this gruesome detail, this 'ingéniosité' with its 'manieristichen Ton' and 'gräßlichen Charakter'?[127] Certainly Silius is not averse to moments of grotesquery,[128] what I would tend to interpret as black humour, though the judgement is a notoriously difficult one. That element is one which I should wish to exclude here, since I consider the extremely brief episode to be of immense paradigmatic significance for the entire fall of Capua. We have frequently noted the fractured nature of the siege narrative. It is a familiar concept that such narrative fragmentation may be represented by literal dismemberment, equating to the metaphorical dismemberment of the metaphorical body which represents the ideally harmonious, unified narrative.[129] Here we have a body, a narrative, mutilated and dismembered in a very specific way: decapitation. Yet both body and text continue by the weight of their own momentum, moving forward even though their whole essence, their *raison d'être* has been removed. This is not, however, an arid narratological game since, as with Quint's assessment of Lucan's fragmented narrative and fragmented world, Silius' decapitated narrative is inextricably intertwined with his conception of Capua and all the cities for which it stands.

A body lying headless, even – as here – a severed head lying bodiless,[130] must evoke the famous image from *Aeneid* 2 of Priam's headless corpse lying on the shore (Verg. *A.*

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[126] Decapitation is a common Homeric death, as Dingel (1997: 268 *ad* Verg. *A.* 9.770f.) notes: e.g. Deucalion at Hom. *Il.* 20.481-3 and Dolon at 10.455-7 (φθεγγομένου δ' ἄρα τοῦ γε κάρη could conceivably parallel the post mortem activity of Ascanius – Lattimore renders 'Dolon's head still speaking' – but the genitive implies rather that Diomedes cuts him off in mid-sentence.)

[127] Spaltenstein (1990) 223 *ad loc.* and Burck (1984b) 43 respectively.

[128] Hutchinson (1992) 289.

[129] Art as body: Arist. *Poet.* 1450b, Pl. *Phdr.* 264c, Hor. *Ars* 1-9. The concept has been most frequently used to account for what was formerly considered a fault of 'Silver' Latin literature. On Lucan, see Quint (1993) 140-7, summed up at 147: 'The epic narrative, which classical literary theory describes with the metaphor of the whole, well-knit body, is deliberately fragmented by Lucan to depict a world out of joint, a history that cannot be organized by imperial apologists into the plot of destiny.' On Lucan and the younger Seneca, see Most (1992).

[130] Headless corpses must also bring to mind the death of Galba, whose description at Tac. *Hist.* 1.39-41, 49 would – unbeknownst to Silius – itself echo Virgil's death of Priam (Benario (1972), Ash (1999) 79-83).

2.557-8):

iacet ingens litore truncus,
auulsumque umeris caput et sine nomine corpus.

As has been much discussed, this image, inconsistent with the preceding narrative of the king's being stabbed at the altar of Jupiter in his palace, *Pompei tangit historiam*, alluding to and perhaps allegorising the death of Pompey.[131] Equally famous is Lucan's awareness and exploitation of this allusion in his description of the corpse of Pompey himself, even signalling his own allusion by the frenzied matrona's 'recognition' of the corpse.[132] Though Silius marks the allusion less explicitly, the echoes are clearly present: *iacuit* for *iacet*, in the same sedes after the strong caesura, its perfect tense suggesting not only the 'speed and force' of Volesus' blow,[133] but the way in which this tableau has lain in the tradition for so long; *truncus* positioned at the end of the line, as it is in Virgil and thereafter in Manilius and in two of the three occasions when Lucan uses it to refer to Pompey;[134] *domini*, a striking image for the body's relationship with the head, and hence the more likely to recall *regnatorem*, suggesting also that Ascanius' rôle is greater than that of mere battle fodder.

This last echo also flags the greater significance of the deaths of Priam and Pompey, the way in which they represent the demise of their respective cities. The image of the body politic is a common one in classical literature, especially in conjunction with the related image of the head, standing in absence and presence for the leadership of that body.[135] Silius himself exploits this image when, at Cannae, the death of Paulus leaves the Roman army leaderless;[136] the Priam and Pompey *topos* is evoked by the way Paulus *iacet…ingens*, but Silius provides his own commentary on Virgil and Lucan by making the allegorical metaphorical, so that it is not the leader representing the people who is headless, but the people themselves. Analogous is Hannibal's rage against Decius, thundering like Jove against one who would, like Asclepius, raise the corpse of Rome from the dead,[137] and especially the image of Carthage as a body whose limbs have been lopped off and which relies now on Hannibal alone (17.149-51):

stabat Carthago, truncatis undique membris,
uni innixa uiro, tantoque fragore ruentem
Hannibal absenti retinebat nomine molem.

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[131] Serv. *ad* Verg. *A.* 2.557-8. Bowie (1990) constructs a thorough and convincing correspondence between the two, including a gloss of Neoptolemus as the new Ptolemy (478). On the probability of an allusion specifically to Asinius Pollio's account of Pompey's death, see Moles (1982-3), Morgan (2000).

[132] Luc. 1.685, 8.722, 9.53. The classic discussion is Narducci (1973), revisited at *id.* (1979) 43-8. Hinds (1998) 8-10 further interprets the matrona's recognition as 'dramatizing our own realization, as readers, that we too have seen this decapitated trunk before: in the second book of the *Aeneid*.' Pompey himself makes an appearance later in the book at the close of Scipio's *nekuia*, paired with Caesar – as in Anchises' prophecy – as harbingers of civil war: *ille, hirta cui subrigitur coma fronte, decorum | et gratum terris Magnus caput.* 13.861-2. With grotesque humour, Silius combines an allusion to Pompey's impressive hair at Luc. 8.679 with a pun on *caput*, meaning 'person' (*OLD* s.v. 7), to produce the image of the unborn Magnus as already a disembodied head in anticipation of his death. Silius' engagement with these passages is also argued by Marpicati (1999), whose thesis is that Silius alludes to both Virgil and Lucan at 5.328-30 and 10.305-11, with the polemical intention of 'correcting' Lucan's glorification of Pompey by aligning him with the fugitive Varro in contrast with Paulus, the true analogue of Priam. On Paulus as Pompey, see Cowan 'Illegitimate Epithets' (forthcoming).

[133] Hardie (1994) 237 *ad* Verg. *A.* 9.770-1, *mutatis mutandis.*

[134] Manil. 4.64; Luc. 8.722, 9.53, the exception being the matrona's vision. Though not placed at the line-end, and literally referring to the idea of trophy as tree trunk, I feel that Evander's apostrophe of the absent Turnus at Verg. *A.* 11.173-5 – *tu quoque nunc stares immanis truncus in aruis, | esset par aetas et idem si robur ab annis, | Turne.* – must, with its *immanis*/*ingens* echo and *stares*/*iacet* antiphrasis, allude to the death of Priam and anticipate Turnus' death.

[135] Ash (1997) 196-200.

[136] *postquam spes italum mentesque in consule lapsae, | ceu truncus capitis, saeuis exercitus armis | sternitur.* 10.309-11.

[137] *tonat inde ferocibus alte | incessens uictor dictis: 'solusne ruentem | fulcire ac reuocare paras a funere Romam?* 11.233-5. The double image of Rome as building and corpse adds to the parallelism.

stabat is not merely a synonym for *erat* here. In context it suggests that the city was still standing, but with the suggestion that a time would soon come when it would not.[138] The emphasis on Carthage's utter reliance on the one man, Hannibal, contains the seeds of the identification of the city with its general, its fall with his.[139] This is the identification we find with Priam, whose death, like Hector's in the *Iliad*,[140] is a symbol – a synecdoche almost – of the literal fall of his city;[141] with Pompey, whose death represents the end of the Republic, of liberty, which in Lucan's conception is all but identical with the end of Rome.[142] The same idea is famously conveyed at the death of Dido, which resembles the fall of Carthage or Tyre,[143] but – like Hector's demise, which it imitates,[144] and Priam's, which it echoes[145] – also adumbrates[146] and even represents that fall.[147] Ovid too combines wit, brevity, and the self-conscious avoidance of Virgilian overlap with the equation of the deaths of Priam and Turnus with the respective sacks of Troy and Ardea.[148] The parallel is thus well established, but there remains a substantial difference between all the above cases and that of Ascanius. Hector, Priam, Pompey, Dido, and Turnus are all established and developed characters in their respective poems and they are all either the ruler or principal defender of their city. Ascanius, by considerable contrast, does not appear before we see him flying across the plain, and there seems to be no reason to think of him as having anything other than a faceless (as well as headless) walk-on part, who would also be nameless but for a desire to 'particularize'. Yet he does have a name, and what a name!

Ascanius was a fairly common cognomen, as numerous inscriptions testify,[149] but the legendary Trojan Ascanius cannot but be evoked by the name's use in an epic narrative. This

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[138] *OLD* s.v. 15. It frequently qualifies cities which are no longer standing, e.g. *steterant Thebae*, Prop. 2.8.10; *stante adhuc Troia*, Sen. *Ag*. 249. As such it is close to the use of *manere*, most notably in the exchange between Dido and Aeneas (*quid, si…Troia antiqua maneret…?* Verg. *A*. 4.311-2; *Priami tecta alta manerent*, 343) and of course in Silius' own apostrophe of Carthage after Cannae, itself playing with another sense of *stare*: *post te cui uertere mores | si stabat fatis, potius, Carthago, maneres*. 10.657-8.

[139] The idea of Hannibal as the sole combatant against Rome begins with Juno's ranging him, like an inverted Cato, against fate: *hunc audet solum componere fatis*. 1.39. See Kißel (1979) 63-4 esp. n.189, 122. It is analogous to the portrayal of Fabius as the one man who restored the republic by delaying (Enn. *Ann*. 363 Skutsch, Verg. *A*. 6.846, with Hardie (1993) 8-10 on the motif in Silius). Ahl-Davis-Pomeroy (1986) 2517 interpret the view as focalised – misguidedly and catastrophically – through Hannibal himself: ' Both Hannibal and Pompey confuse their own identities with those of their countries in a way Aeneas does not.'

[140] Hom. *Il*. 22.408-11. The simile can be interpreted in terms either of cause and effect – 'This emphasized similarity comes very close to saying that by killing Hector, Achilles has in effect burned Troy.' Taplin (1992) 250 – or of symbolism – 'the fall of Troy is not depicted, but that Hector's demise symbolises it is made clear.' Bowie (1990) 470-1 – or even of identification: 'Hector is Troy, in a way that no Achaean, even Achilles, stands for the Greek side.' Ross (1998) 121.

[141] The idea may be anticipated in the words with which Homer both has Agamemnon comfort Menelaus and Hector warn Andromache: ἔσσεται ἦμαρ ὅτ' ἄν ποτ' ὀλώλῃ Ἴλιος ἰρὴ | καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς ἐϋμμελίω Πριάμοιο, *Il*. 4.164-5=6.448-9, where the apparently redundant – but widely influential (see Wills (1996) 33-41) – polyptoton implicitly equates, even identifies the three cola, holy Ilion, Priam and the people of Priam. On the *Aeneid*: 'Virgil uses a variety of devices to mark Priam's death as an end-point and, more specifically, as an emblem of the end of the city.' Bowie (1990) 470.

[142] 'come nella fine di Priamo si rispecchiava quella di Troia, così nella morte di Pompeo si riflettono il crollo di Roma e la fine della libertà.' Narducci (1973) 323; similar sentiments *id*. (1979) 44. Cf. Ahl (1976) 184-9, also comparing the simile of Dido's death, on which see below.

[143] *resonat magnis plangoribus aether, | non aliter, quam si immissis ruat hostibus omnis | Karthago aut antiqua Tyros, flammaeque furentes | culmina perque hominum uoluantur perque deorum*. Verg. *A*. 4.668-71. Technically, as with Hector, it is the lament produced which resembles that which the sack would produce.

[144] Noted as early as Macrobius *Sat*. 4.6.5.

[145] Fenik (1959) 19-21.

[146] Austin (1955) 192 *ad loc*. Edgeworth (1977: 130) notes the equation of Dido with Carthage, but links her unusual death by pyre to the fall of Carthage in 146 b.c. through its apparent allusion to the death of the wife of Hasdrubal, the Carthaginian commander, as described in the fragmentary Polyb. 38.7-8, App. *Pun*. 19.131 and Liv. *perioch*. 51.

[147] Copley (1969) 214-5; Glover (1904) 162-3; Estevez (1974) has basic but useful things to say on the parallels between queen and city, especially as illustrated by key similes at 4.68-73, 300-3 and 665-71.

[148] *Troia simul Priamusque cadunt*. Ov. *Met*. 13.404; *Turnus cadit: cadit Ardea, Turno | sospite dicta potens*. 14.573-4.

[149] *TLL* II.752.1ff s.v. 6.

figure is famous principally for two things. Firstly, he is the son of Aeneas and Creusa.[150] As such, it is striking that his namesake replays the fate of his grandfather, the *Aeneid*'s great hope for the future cast in the rôle of the symbol of the past and all that must be left behind, a reversal, or at least negation of the earlier poem's great teleological narrative. Secondly, he is the founder of Alba Longa, and is repeatedly referred to as such.[151] In a narrative which, as we have already seen, constantly evokes the fall of Alba, the use of such a name for a character who, again like Priam, is the last named individual to be killed,[152] must provoke the reader to think of the founder of that city. If the reader responds, two things occur. Ascanius acquires the stature, as founder, to stand as symbol for the fall of the city, and the reading of his death against Priam's and Pompey's becomes comprehensible. Secondly, the fall of the city is, once more, associated with that of Alba. The latter echo gains added resonance from the attested echoes of the fall of Alba in Virgil's narration of the fall of Troy.[153]

altera Alba Capua may be, but the application of this particular symbolism to Capua herself is of particular aptness. One of the etymologies of her name was from *caput*, a symbol of her rôle – or aspirations – to be *caput rerum*.[154] That the *caput* should fall and lie on the ground suggests both that Capua is likewise prostrate and that her aspirations to hegemony – reiterated shortly afterwards in Virrius' speech – have come to nought. However, it is not only the head which is associated with Capua. If anything, there is a strong dissociation of head and body, whereby the former is seen as a separate entity under the control of the latter. Thus, Ascanius, as we have seen, is described as the head's *dominus*, while he himself, *ipse*, is carried on by his momentum.[155] The very specific detail of Capua as a body without a head is one which would be familiar to the reader from Livy's famous description of the city precisely at the end of the Hannibalic war (31.29.11):

> *Capua quidem sepulcrum ac monumentum Campani populi, elato et extorri eiecto ipso populo, superest, urbs trunca sine senatu, sine plebe, sine magistratibus, prodigium, relicta crudelius habitanda quam si deiecta foret.*

Here is the image of death, of a headless corpse, a tombstone, reminder and warning to the people of Campania. Also present is the sense of a living death, since the monstrous ruins are more cruel than an actual sack. Here we have Ascanius, running on under his own momentum even though he has been decapitated, even though he is now *truncus*, here Capua still standing – like Alba, which was never stormed, but ceased to be a living city with living inhabitants – continuing a trajectory through time, even though she lacks all that makes a city a city. Both the sack and narrative of the sack are truncated, and in turn they leave a truncated city to continue in some kind of half existence.

6. Death of a nationalist

[150] *RE* II.1610.57ff s.v. Askanios 4; Roscher I.i.611.36ff s.v. Askanios 1.
[151] Verg. *A.* 1.271, 5.597, 8.48; Liv. 1.3.3-4; Tib. 2.5.50; Ov. *Met.* 14.609; V. Max. 1.8.7; Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.39; Solin. 2.15; Iust. 43.1.13 (*TLL* II.752.1ffs.v. 1 31ff *conditor Albae Longae*). Paschalis (1997: 63-4) associates As*canius* with *canus*, and hence with *albus* as the derivation of the city's name.
[152] The suicides of Virrius' friends and of Taurea are of a different order.
[153] Most notably, *de Albano excidio translatus est locus.* Serv. *ad* Verg. *A.* 2.486. See also Norden (1915) 154-8, Wigodsky (1972) 70, Skutsch (1985) 279-80, Rossi (2004) 42-4.
[154] Capua as *caput urbium*: Flor. 1.11.16, Isid. *Etym.* 15.1.54, implicit at Strab. 5.4.3, explicit *ibid.* 5.4.10: κεφαλὴ τῷ ὄντι κατὰ τὴν ἐτυμότητα τοῦ ὀνόματος. See Heurgon (1942) 136-7 on all the ancient etymologies, and Piccaluga (1983-4) 110-1.
[155] This reverses the portrayal of Phegeus' decapitation at Verg. *A.* 12.382, as interpreted by Heuzé (1985) 79: 'Le corps n'a pas le prix de la tête, en qui s'est concentré en quelque sorte l'essentiel de la personnalité.'

With the death of Ascanius, the individual deaths of the siege end. The remaining defenders retreat and bar the gates against their *socios*, just as they have excluded their true *socii*, the Romans, for four years, a perversion of nature which is the corollary of their unnatural admittance of their natural enemy, Hannibal.[156] Night falls and the Romans sleep the sleep, if not of the just, then at least of the victorious, while Capua is full of wailing, longing for an end to the siege, to the siege narrative. The chief men of the city – the *caput…senatus*, as if to underline the allegory of Ascanius' death – murmur and Virrius makes a speech. The equivalent speech in Livy (26.13.4-19) is a long argument against attempting negotiation, which emphasizes the enormity of Capua's crimes and the determination for revenge which the Romans have shown. Importantly for Silius, he offers the paradigm of Alba, an *a fortiori* case to prove that the Romans are merciless towards kin and will be proportionately more so towards Capua, who are more hateful to them than Carthage (16). Note that he does not consider Capua as the Romans' kin, a motif so insistently repeated in the *Punica*. This is an excellent illustration of – and may even be the starting point for – Silius' use of Alban imagery throughout the siege of Capua, constructing the latter as both another Alba and an inverted Alba, its other, and as such both another Rome and *its* other. Livy's Virrius goes on to anticipate all the conventional topoi of city-sacking which he will not see.[157] Ironically, of course, it is not suicide which removes these horrors from the Capuans' gaze, but the fact that they do not occur. Instead of the anticipated horrors, he offers places at a banquet where poison will be drunk and a freedom from the horrors of defeat avoided, suicides which their enemies will admire and from which Hannibal will learn that his betrayed allies were brave. In the *Punica*, the speech is much shorter and focuses on Virrius' thwarted hopes and on the suicide to come, both important themes in the depiction of Capua.[158]

The emphasis upon Virrius' frustrated aspirations – what might have been – as opposed to the enormity of his crime shifts the focus from a Romanocentric conception of history to one which pictures alternative paths which events might have taken, alternative realities which might have come into existence. This may be seen as a corollary of the motif, common in epic from Homer onwards, whereby it is stated that an event would have happened, if only some other event had not prevented it.[159] Silius is particularly fond of the motif. It occurs on a small scale, as in the previous episode, where the camp would have been taken there and then but for nightfall. This combines motifs from the already-cited Homeric passage, where Troy's capture was delayed but not prevented by Apollo, and from one of the privileged intertexts for the whole siege, *Aeneid* 9, where, if Turnus had opened the gates, he would have ended both the war and the Trojan race.[160] Capua reverts to the old Trojan model whose obsessive repetition Virgil's camp has avoided: she will not be captured now, but the reprieve will be brief. On a larger scale, the whole destiny of the Roman people is shown to be dependent upon certain contingencies: were it not for Fabius' divine power and resolve, the last age of the Trojan name would have been past;[161] were it not, more

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[156] *conuertunt gressus recipique precantis | (infandum) excludunt socios dum cardine uerso | obnixi torquent obices, munimina sera*. 13.250-2, with a possible pun on *sĕra*/*sēra*. Cf. Decius' protests against secession: *quos fugitis socios? quosue additis?* 11.177.

[157] *nec dirui incendique patriam uidebo, nec rapi ad stuprum matres Campanas uirginesque et ingenuos pueros*. 26.13.15.

[158] Brief comparisons of the two speeches may be found at Rebischke (1913) 123-4 and Burck (1984b) 43-4.

[159] E.g. Troy would have been taken but for Apollo, Hom. *Il.* 18.454-6; Troy would be standing if fate had not led the Trojans to ignore Laocoön's advice, Verg. *A.*2.54-6. For a discussion of the motif from Homer to late antiquity, see Nesselrath (1992). I shall be discussing the phenomenon in Silius in more depth in Cowan 'Virtual Epic' (forthcoming). On the use of counterfactuals in Roman historiography, see Morello (2002) and O'Gorman (2006).

[160] *et si continuo uictorem ea cura subisset, | rumpere claustra manu sociosque immittere portis, | ultimus ille dies bello gentique fuisset*. Verg. *A.* 9.757-9.

[161] *ac ni sacra seni uis impressumque fuisset | sistere Fortunam cunctando aduersa fouentem | ultima Dardanii transisset nominis aetas*. 7.9-11, echoing the *ultimus ille dies* of Verg. *A.* 9.757-9 above.

disturbingly, for Venus' inspiration in Jupiter of lust for Pomponia, a Sidonian virgin would now be lighting the Trojan altars;[162] if either Scipio had been born in Carthage or Hannibal in Italy, power would have gone to each's homeland.[163] Such instances of *Ungeschehenes Geschehen*, to borrow Nesselrath's title, may have two – almost diametrically opposed – effects upon the reader. They can confirm the teleological thrust of the narrative and of fate, which succeeds, despite such potential pitfalls and distractions, in attaining its ultimate – and ultimately inevitable – τέλος. Conversely – inversely even – it can open up a vista of parallel universes and alternative realities, whose potential for existence emphasises the contingency of the history and the narrative which the reader has before her. Troy fell to the wooden horse, but what if she had fallen to Patroclus a few months earlier? What if Turnus had opened the gates and allowed the Rutulians to obliterate the Trojan race, so that Rome as we know it was never founded? What if Fabius had not delayed, Jupiter not seduced Pomponia, Scipio been born in Africa? Despite the voice of reason's ceaselessly whispering in her ear, 'Ah, but it did not', the mind of speculation will still wonder, 'What if it had?' These are the alternative realities upon which the doomed Virrius meditates.

He repeats what he had hoped for and what he had promised, the perfect tenses ironically conveying not completion but the impossibility of completion, the end of hope (13.264-9):

> *'speraui sceptra Ausoniae pepigique, sub armis*
> *si dexter Poenis deus et Fortuna fuisset,*
> *ut Capuam Iliaci migrarent regna Quirini.*
> *qui quaterent muros Tarpeiaque moenia, misi;*
> *nec mihi poscendi uigor afuit, alter ut aequos*
> *portaret fasces nostro de nomine consul.'*

He recalls here the demands he made back in book eleven,[164] a simple but effective use of ring composition to signal the simultaneous closure of the episode, of his life, and of Capua. However, the gloss which he here puts on these demands casts it in the terms of Rome, and specifically Cicero's greatest fears of Capua as the new Rome. Ceauşescu's remains the best survey of this persistent fear of an alternative capital.[165] Two slightly different concepts are held in balance. The first is that of a clear alternative to Rome, utterly different from her except inasmuch as it would inevitably define its identity through opposition to everything Roman. Carthage, as rival for world hegemony, is one example, but more explicitly formulated as such is Italica, the renamed Corfinium, which was the Italians' capital during the Social War. Strabo describes the allies κοινὴν ἅπασι τοῖς Ἰταλιώταις ἀποδείξαντες πόλιν ἀντὶ τῆς Ῥώμης.[166] The second is the actual transference of specifically Roman power to another city, a true *altera Roma* as opposed to a city *pro Roma*. This is the implication in Livy's great speech of Camillus against the transfer of power to Veii after the Gallic sack, and of Cicero's against the Rullan agrarian laws.[167] This, one imagines, is what Metellus and his collaborators intend when they plan after Cannae to escape across the sea,

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[162] *quae ni prouisa fuissent, | Sidonia Iliacas nunc uirgo accenderet aras.* 13.619-20. On some of the wider implications of Venus' intervention, see ch. 4 above.
[163] *Scipio si Libycis esset generatus in oris | sceptra ad Agenoreos credunt ventura nepotes: | Hannibal Ausonia genitus si sede fuisset | haud dubitant terras Itala in dicione futuras.* 17.402-5. I cite this passage as an example of an alternative reality, but it is equally if not more significant as a demonstration of the collapse of distinctions between the polar opposites of the enemy generals, on which see Hardie (1993) 24-5.
[164] 11.55-63. Burck (1984b) 44.
[165] Ceauşescu (1976).
[166] Strab. 5.4.2, Ceauşescu (1976) 79.
[167] Liv. 5.51-4; Cic. *leg. ag.* 2.85-97.

before Scipio, Camillus-like, stops them and binds them by oath to stay.[168] Of course, the fear is that the latter will turn into the former since, as Camillus implies, it is the site of Rome which makes it Roman; cities, *pace* Thucydides' Nicias, are walls not men; Rome's fortune is tied up with its site (Liv. 5.54.6). Cicero (*leg. ag.* 2.97) specifically fears that the Roman colonists of Capua will be corrupted by the richness of the land, corrupted more, indeed, than those who have become accustomed to it.

It is this second to which Virrius aspired. He hoped that Roman dominion would *migrare* from Rome to Capua, the precise process which Camillus forbade,[169] parallel to the Caprian nymphs' fearful question, *num migrantur Rhoeteia regna* |*in Libyam superis?*[170]. His aspiration is given particular piquancy by the Trojan origins which Silius has so emphasized and which have throughout contributed so much to the conception of Capua as *altera Roma*. This is the reason why Quirinus is specifically *Iliacus*; Virrius hoped that Trojan Rome had had its day and must give way to Trojan Capua, just as Trojan Alba had to her, its inhabitants compelled to migrate to a new city.[171] His wish was for an alternative teleology, a Capuan *Aeneid*, a *Capyid* such as the bard Teuthras sang, which would trace human – and cosmic – history from chaos through the sack of Troy to the glory of Capuan *imperium*.[172] This would have occurred in an alternative reality, if god and Fortune had been *dexter*, just as Troy would have stood if the gods, fate and the Trojans' minds had not been *laeua*. The connection provides a glimpse of the underlying thrust of this narrative where cities fall so that Capua may rise, first Troy and then Rome, which Virrius grandiosely pictures himself sending Hannibal to sack.[173] However, this *is* an alternative reality; god and Fortune were not favourable, and it is Capua, not Rome, which will become another entry on the list of cities whose fall is necessary for Rome's rise.[174]

Since all this has not come to pass, Virrius, like Macbeth, has lived long enough, and, like his Livian self, proposes suicide rather than surrender (11.270-8):

> *'hactenus est uixisse satis. dum copia noctis,*
> *cui cordi comes aeterna est Acherontis ad undam*
> *libertas, petat ille meas mensasque dapesque*
> *et uictus mentem fuso per membra Lyaeo*
> *sopitoque necis morsu medicamina cladis*
> *hauriat ac placidis exarmet fata uenenis.'*
> *haec ait et turba repetit comitante penatis.*
> *aedibus in mediis consurgens ilice multa*
> *extruitur rogus, hospitium commune peremptis.*

There is a certain poignancy, a certain nobility about this speech, in contrast with both Silius' earlier and Livy's consistent characterisation of Virrius.[175] The honourable suicide, the *Freitod*, is a recurrent motif in the poem,[176] but collective suicide by (in this case, only a

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[168] Sil. 10.415-48. Cf. Liv. 22.53.4-13.
[169] *seruatam deinde bello patriam iterum in pace haud dubie seruauit cum prohibuit* ***migrari Veios***. Liv. 5.49.8.
[170] 7.431-2. On this episode, see Stärk (1993) and Perutelli (1997), though both treat it as a mannerist digression; I shall argue for its more integral place in the poem in ch. 4 of *Indivisible Cities*.
[171] Alban migration to Rome: Liv. 1.29.5.
[172] I shall discuss this in ch. 5 of *Indivisible Cities*, a revised version of Cowan (2002) 34-68.
[173] Livy's Virrius is more modest and realistic. *Hannibal* is the first word of his catalogue of provocations which failed to distract the Romans, and subject of all the verbs (26.13.10-1).
[174] '[I]t is a recurrent theme of the *Aeneid* that the greatness of Rome is ensured only by the destruction of other potentially powerful cities.' Hardie (1986) 348 on the fall of Alba alluded to by the presence of Mettus on the shield of Aeneas. Cf. Rossi (2004) 193-4.
[175] Kiβel (1979) 59.
[176] Kiβel (1979) 59-60, McGuire (1989) 33-41, more extensively at (1997) 205-25. On Roman suicide more generally, see Hill (2004) and Edwards (2007).

portion of) the population of a besieged city demands comparison with the suicide of the Saguntines in book 2.[177] As such it forms arguably the climax of a complex of parallels and contrasts between the two siege narratives. On the most basic level, one is besieged by the Carthaginians, the other by the Romans, even though both are theoretically allies of the latter, both bound by ties of kinship.[178] These basic points of comparison, taken together, set up the opposition between the two cities as one of *fides* as against *perfidia*,[179] and hence of Rome against Carthage.[180] Just as Saguntum stands as a substitute for Rome, the closest Hannibal will come to sacking it, so Capua is not merely a substitute but an anticipation of the capture and eventual destruction of Carthage. Is, however, the opposition as simple and – comparatively – neat as it appears? In order to arrive at some sort of answer to that question, it will be necessary to examine the Capuan suicide in a little more detail, and to compare the most obvious parallel of all with the Saguntine narrative, the intervention of the personified Fides and a Fury.

The Capuan suicide is a very Capuan suicide. In place of the frenzied mutual slaughter which marked the Saguntine self-immolation as a type of civil war,[181] there is a banquet. Ring composition is utilized once more as the reader's mind returns to the banquet held for Hannibal, which was itself destructive and indeed almost fatal to his army's prospects of victory, where a demonic being contributed to a painless, even pleasurable demise, as Venus and her Cupidines infected the Carthaginians with *luxus*.[182] Indeed the characteristic *luxus* which attends the suicide has led some to interpret it not as a Stoic *Freitod*, but rather as a world-weary expression of ennui.[183] Stärk, most forcefully, argues against seeing anything more than a Stoic veneer in a suicide which he considers more closely paralleled by the Campanian suicides of Petronius and Tigellinus, and especially by that of Cleopatra, whose desire for a painless death similarly followed a banquet of those about to die. 'Doch ist nicht jeder Suizid ein stoischer Freitod…Ihr Tod dient nicht der Vermeidung von Unehre, sondern von Unlust.'[184] The case is somewhat overstated. Certainly the particular nature of the suicide marks it out as typical of Capuan decadence, but that is rather emblematic, suggesting that the decadence is the cause of the downfall. Moreover, the emphasis on *libertas* must not be overlooked, or dismissed as mere posturing. In terms of the dominant voice, or code, of the poem, the Roman code, Capua broke faith with Rome, and was therefore *perfida* in absolute terms. Yet in her own narrative, in Virrius' alternative epic, Capua would have been a world power, a master, not a slave to Rome. Likewise, the parallelism with the suicides of the principate, which Stärk produces by invoking the names of Petronius and Tigellinus, could be given a very different significance by invoking other names, such as Seneca, Thrasea Paetus and Helividius Priscus. Such echoes – faint but audible – serve to figure Virrius as emblematic of the limited – yet, within its circumscribed area, total – power of the individual in the face of overwhelming power. Suicide is the only victory left for the Capuans, as is brought out by the paradoxes of Virrius' speech, where

[177] von Albrecht (1964) 62, Kiβel (1979) 97 n.25, Burck (1984b) 45, Schenk (1989) 360. On Sauguntum, the most widely-discussed episode in the *Punica*, see von Albrecht (1964) 57-62, 181-3; Vessey (1974a); Kißel (1979) 97-9; Küppers (1986) 107-70; McGuire (1989) 33-41, (1997) 207-19; Feeney (1991) 307-8; Hardie (1993) 81-2, Cowan (2002) 28-33, Dominik (2003), (2006). I shall discuss it myself in the second chapter of *Indivisible Cities*.

[178] The Saguntines are given ancestors from Ardea at 1.291-3.

[179] Kiβel (1979) 97, Schenk (1989) 360, cautiously following in the tradition of von Albrecht (1964) 62, part of his case – true in small part but wildly overstated – that '[m]an kann das Werk geradezu als ein "Epos der Fides" bezeichnen.' (55).

[180] 'Capua verhalte sich also zu Karthago wie Sagunt zu Rom.' Schenk (1989) 360.

[181] On the civil war colouring of the fall of Saguntum, see esp. McGuire (1989) 37-41, revisited and expanded at (1997) 211-9; cf. Hardie (1993) 82, Cowan (2002) 29-30, Dominik (2003).

[182] 11.385-438, with Cowan (2002) 37-52.

[183] It should be mentioned that the banquet described by Livy (26.14.3-5) is much more luxurious and decadent, containing details excluded by Silius, most notably the excessive consumption which ironically slows the effect of the poison.

[184] Stärk (1995) 224. The 'philosophischen Anstrich' is approvingly quoted from Burck (1984b) 44. This parallel would gain added point from the intertextuality between the earlier Capuan banquet and that given by Lucan's Cleopatra.

they will only be conquered by wine, where poison is *medicamina cladis,* and will disarm fate. Alternatively, one could accept Stärk's invocation of Petronius, but read Virrius' suicide as Tacitus – and Griffin – read that of the *arbiter elegantiae,* as an alternative – a lower-case epicurean riposte – to the self-aggrandising Stoic gesture of a Cato, a Seneca or, perhaps, a Saguntine.[185] In either case, this assimilation of Virrius to the vanquished of history is assisted by the echoes of Dido's death in his suicide. The pyre is already a feature of the story in Livy's account, but Silius moves it from *in propatulo aedium* to *aedibus in mediis*, comparable to Dido's *penetrali in sede*, and moreover builds it from the same wood as she does, the holm-oak.[186] Finally, while *hospitium commune peremptis* suggests that Virrius' plan, as in Livy, is to have slaves incinerate their already dead bodies, in the event, once the poison has penetrated his marrow as the fire of love had Dido's, he climbs onto the pyre, embracing those who are joining him in death.[187] Thus he shares her rôles as necessary but protesting victim of the rise of Rome, and as symbol of one's city, which must likewise perish. Hence his suicide, the self-destruction of the city, may be read from either perspective as the satisfyingly moral conclusion to a cautionary tale, or the simultaneously triumphant and lamenting act of the vanquished.

The suicide of the Capuans is thus not only parallel to, but equal in complexity to that of the Saguntines. This complexity – as well as the parallelism – derives, at least in part, from Fides' appearing at Capua, as she had at Saguntum (13.281-91):

> *despectat ab alto*
> *sacra Fides agitatque uirum fallacia corda.*
> *uox occulta subit passim diffusa per auras:*
> *'foedera, mortales, ne saeuo rumpite ferro,*
> *sed castam seruate Fidem. fulgentibus ostro*
> *haec potior regnis. dubio qui frangere rerum*
> *gaudebit pacta ac tenuis spes linquet amici,*
> *non illi domus, aut coniunx, aut uita manebit*
> *umquam expers luctus lacrimaeque. aget aequore semper*
> *ac tellure premens, aget aegrum nocte dieque*
> *despecta ac uiolata Fides.'*

This epiphany – if the term may be extended to encompass a disembodied voice – expresses in extremely straightforward terms the moral which many, especially von Albrecht, would consider that of the episode and indeed the poem as a whole.[188] The words of Fides may even be interpreted as merely the guilty thoughts and emotions of the Capuans, the goddess adopting the rôle of metaphor.[189] Such an interpretation certainly seems to be facilitated by the immediately preceding reference to the thoughts of the *uulgus* turning too late to Decius, and by the absence of the detailed personification and characterisation which marked her intervention at Saguntum.[190] If, however, one attempts to read beyond the surface of

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[185] Petronius' suicide: Tac. *Ann*. 16.18-9, with Griffin, M. (1986) 199: 'the anti-philosophical tradition of death with panache…[Tacitus'] triumph in this style is the death of Petronius…clearly regarded by victim and writer as the answer to the *iactatio* of people like Seneca.'

[186] *parati erunt qui magno rogo in propatulo aedium accenso corpora exanima iniciant*. Liv. 26.13.18; Sil. 13.277-8 (quoted above); *at regina, pyra penetrali in sede sub auras | erecta ingenti taedis atque ilice secta*. Verg. *A*. 4.504-5.

[187] *Virrius interea, dum dat penetrare medullas | exitio, ascenditque pyram atque amplexibus haeret | iungentum fata et subici iubet ocius ignis.* 13.296-8*; est mollis flamma medullas | interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus.* Verg. *A*. 4.66-7.

[188] 'Fides selbst wird…die exemplarische Bedeutung des Strafgerichts unterstreichen.' von Albrecht (1964) 62. Cf. Burck (1984b) 45: 'Mit diesem moralisierenden Appell berührt er ein Hauptanliegen seines Epos.'

[189] 'Die Rede…einer Art personifizierten inneren Monologs gleichkommt.' Burck (1984b) 45. Cf. Kiβel (1979) 96.

[190] Decius: 13.279-81. Fides at Saguntum: 2.479-525, with von Albrecht (1964) 56-62, Vessey (1974) 30-3, Küppers (1986) 164-6.

abstracted moralising, she begins to appear less personification and more goddess. Her moralising has a vengeful tone,[191] and as she stresses the inexorable vengeance which pursues the man who has violated and despised her, she comes to resemble not only an instrument of divine, providential punishment, but also a slighted, Homeric goddess who is avenging an insult to her τιμή. Silius wittily plays on the interpretive space between the conception of Fides as abstract quality and Fides as embodied goddess. Her first words already play with this doubleness as her admonition against breaking *foedera* is suddenly transformed by the final word of the line, *ferro*, which gives an unexpected concreteness to the treaties, which are not merely broken in warfare, but physically burst with a sword.[192] Likewise, she is sacred faithfulness, which must not be violated, but also the virgin Fides, who must not be raped.[193] With such strong suggestions of her rôle as goddess, the crime of the persecuted man becomes not merely to despise the privileged quality of faithfulness, but to show contempt for a goddess, a slight to her τιμή such as provokes Juno to action.[194] The case should not be overstated, any more than should that for the simplistic, moralising reading, but reservations about the rôle of Fides, and thus of the Capuan suicide, are implanted in the reader's mind.

It is not merely the presence of Fides, nor the basic antithesis of Saguntum and Capua which leads the reader to recall the sack of the Spanish city here. Fides is not alone (13.291-5):

> *adit omnia iamque*
> *concilia ac mensas contingit et abdita nube*
> *accumbitque toris epulaturque improba Erinys.*
> *ipsa etiam Stygio spumantia pocula tabo*
> *porrigit et large poenas letumque ministrat.*

Having said that Fides is not alone, it must be observed that one available reading of this passage is that she *is* the Fury, and that *improba Erinys* should be taken in apposition.[195] Considering the emphasis on divine punishment in her speech,[196] this is not impossible and, at the very least, the long delay in establishing the subject of the sentence must lead the reader to assume that it remains Fides.[197] Even if the two are not identical, it is clear that they are working in tandem.[198] Fides' rôle is to trouble the minds of the Capuans, the Erinys' to provide the poison. The Erinys too is thus interpretable as a metaphor for the sense of guilt or madness which drives the Capuans to suicide, but here the emphasis on physicality is even greater. She *adit*, is present to offer succour, like a god answering a prayer '*ades*!'[199] This is both a perversion of the formula and a normative use of it, depending on whether one reads

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[191] McGuire (1997) 223. He may be stretching a point to suggest that the Capuans are, in fact, keeping faith with their alliance with Carthage, though this would be in keeping with a Capua- rather than Rome-centred perspective.
[192] *rumpere OLD* s.v. 11 'to break, violate, infringe' ~ 6a 'to sever abruptly'.
[193] *castus OLD* s.v. 3 ~ 5; *uiolo OLD* s.v. 3 ~ 2c.
[194] Juno's first words in the poem are '*intulerit Latio, spreta me, Troius' inquit* / '*exul Dardaniam*' 1.42-4; 'The poem begins, as does the *Aeneid*…with a soliloquy from the goddess, cataloguing the slights she has suffered.' Feeney (1991) 303-4. Of the only other two uses of *despectus* in the poem, one refers to a quality (*pacis…honos* despised by Hannibal, 1.59) and one to a person (Iarbas despised by Dido, 8.54).
[195] Spaltenstein (1990: 226 *ad* 13.291) notes the possibility but rules it out on the dubious grounds that Fides would not have access to the underworld.
[196] *Erinys* is used in very abstracted terms of the justice which punishes Hieronymus with the denial of burial at 14.99 (along with an excruciating instance of the recurrent *Poenae*/*Poeni* pun).
[197] Williams (1978) 244-5 accounts for the frequent failure of 'Silver' writers to clarify the subjects of sentences, especially when there is a change of subject, as being due to the poet's relying on performance to signal such subtleties. Though the subject is eventually defined here, a similar *aporeia* is initially produced.
[198] I feel Hershkowitz (1998: 53 n225) goes just a little too far in claiming that 'Fides makes her Fury-like behaviour explicit'.
[199] *OLD* s.v. 13. The formula is used by the women of Rome in their prayer to Juno at 7.78-85.

the suicide as a deliverance or a punishment, a question which its very ambiguity prompts the reader to consider. However, it is the parallel with Tisiphone in the Saguntine episode which is the most striking aspect of the passage.[200] The word *Erinys* occurs seven times in the poem: here, in relation to Hieronymus (14.99), inspiring Metellus' plan to abandon Rome (10.417), and four times referring to Tisiphone at Saguntum (2.595, 609, 625, 693). This, combined with the already established similarity of the situation, demands that the two be compared, if not identified.[201] What then is the consequence of such a comparison? On one level, Silius provides a commentary on the earlier episode. As we have seen, critics have repeatedly noticed how the ostensibly opposed Fides and Tisiphone have precisely the same effect at Saguntum.[202] The poet himself reinforces the point here by having the two explicitly working in tandem, their identities overlapping even. The hints of the vengeful, demonic Juno which were just perceptible in the piqued subtext of Fides' speech are accentuated by her collaboration, perhaps even her employment of a figure who, if she is not Tisiphone herself, is at least one of her equally hellish sisters. Fides' action upon the Capuans, her ἐνθουσιασμός of them with panic and a desire for self-destruction is tainted in all sorts of ways. While on one, undeniably dominant, reading, it remains a just punishment for the breaking of faith with Rome, its manifold secondary associations taint it with civil war,[203] with the power of hell and with the morally dubious intervention of gods on behalf of Rome, as exemplified in Capua by Venus, or the pantheon who defended Rome.[204] The movement of the narrative towards the sack of Capua yet again parallels, resembles, contrasts with that of other cities.

7. Pan's people

Yet the city is not sacked. Just as in Hannibal's great defence, Taurea's *Zweikampf*, and the triplets' aristeia, the expected, satisfying climax does not occur. Livy tells of a debate at Rome as to the relative expediency of destroying or preserving Capua, the latter course being preferred in order to provide accommodation for farmers to cultivate the region's excellent land.[205] In contrast to this carefully deliberated decision in favour of *utilitas*, Silius provides a narrative surprise to both readers and characters. The Roman soldiers are spectators (*spectabant,* 11.309), focalizers for the reader, to a scene typical of a sacked city, women and children, but also men whose beards and hair are made filthy with dust, weeping like women, especially like the women of a sacked city.[206] They wait for, expect the signal to

[200] Burck (1984b) 45.
[201] Spaltenstein (1990) 226 *ad* 13.291 neatly compares her with the *Furiarum maxima* punishing the inmates of Tartarus at Verg. *A.* 6.605-6, thus emphasising her rôle as an instrument of divine justice. However, that Fury must still suggest Tisiphone or one of her sisters, not least since the very next book of the *Aeneid* will introduce Allecto.
[202] Most eloquently, Feeney (1991) 308: 'In effect, Fides and Tisiphone are collaborators….The divine figures have enabled Silius economically to encapsulate the paradoxical nature of the act, at once glorious and repellent, noble and bestial, by juxtaposing two diametrically opposed creatures as the jointly responsible agents.' Cf. McGuire (1989) 37-41, (1997) 211-9.
[203] The Capuan *Selbstvernichtung* does not have the same explicitly fratricidal features as the Saguntine, but its intratextuality with the latter, as well as the general figuring of civil war as a city's suicide, suffices to make the connection.
[204] The parallel between the latter may be flagged by the way in which the gods protecting Rome, like the Erinys destroying Capua, are hidden in a cloud (until Juno reveals them): 12.707. On Silius' fondness for this motif, see Spaltenstein (1986) 85 *ad* 1.551.
[205] Liv. 26.16. Silius does nod to this explanation when Pan teaches the Romans that it would be *utile* to leave houses in the ager Campanus at 13.322-4.
[206] 11.304-13. The stress on gender terms – *uiros* (309), *femineum* (313), even the air is *tenues* (313) – reinforces the decadent, effeminate, transgressive nature of Capuan society, where men behave like women, just as they dress like them. Silius also shows how their immoderate response to disaster – in contrast to the ennobling effect of Cannae on Rome – derives from the same moral weakness which allowed prosperity to lead them to arrogance and decadence: *et laeta et tristia ferre | indocilis* 309. There is also Stoic colouring to the idea, as Spaltenstein (1986: 416 *ad* 6.368) notes of the Regulus episode, citing Sen. *Ep.* 66.6: *animus…asperis blandisque pariter inuictus*.

sack the city (13.314-25):

> *atque ea dum miles miratur inertia facta*
> *expectatque ferox sternendi moenia signum,*
> *ecce repens tacito percurrit pectora sensu*
> *religio et saeuas componit numine mentis,*
> *ne flammam taedasque uelint, ne templa sub uno*
> *in cinerem traxisse rogo. subit intima corda*
> *perlabens sensim mitis deus. ille superbae*
> *fundamenta Capyn posuisse antiquitus urbi*
> *non cuiquam uisus passim monet, ille refusis*
> *in spatium immensum campis habitanda relinqui*
> *utile tecta docet. paulatim atrocibus irae*
> *languescunt animis, et uis mollita senescit.*

They do not merely remain inactive until the signal should come, they regard it as about to happen, since that is the next stage in the narrative pattern of the sack of a city.[207] Suddenly, instead of focalising through the soldiers, the visual frame pans out a level, as the reader is urged to behold – *ecce* – a sudden *religio* steals upon them. They are possessed by a *mitis deus*, who remains unnamed for six lines before being revealed as the god Pan, sent by Jupiter to prevent the sack of a Trojan city (13.326).

The choice of Pan is not immediately an obvious one, nor is the description of him as *mitis deus*.[208] His presence here has a number of explanations.[209] Pan is the son of Hermes, and as such may be seen to be following his father's footsteps in the family business by acting as Jupiter's messenger.[210] This idea might be extended a little further to figure the son's being sent by Jupiter as marking the filial relationship of the poem to the *Aeneid* and of the episode to Mercury's mission to extricate Aeneas from Carthage.[211] Certainly Pan's appearance, like Mercury's, works as the inverse and even the reverse of the effects of Venus in Carthage and Capua respectively. An even closer parallel with the *Aeneid*, to which this episode also stands in filial relationship, is Jupiter's sending of Mercury to make the Carthaginians hospitable and allay their fierceness towards the shipwrecked Trojans.[212] He also has Italian connections,[213] syncretized as he was with Faunus, and thus associated with the Lupercalia, as Silius reminds the reader.[214] However, this festival association aside,

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[207] *expectatque ferox sternendi moenia signum*, 13.315. I read *ex(s)pecto* as possessing not only its *OLD* s.v. 1 sense 'To wait for' but also 2 'To regard…as about to happen, expect'.

[208] On Pan, see *RE* Supp. VIII.949.65ff., Roscher III.i.1347.62ff. and Borgeaud (1988), to whom the following discussion is indebted for most of its Greek material.

[209] Among those I find unsatisfactory, or at best partial, are 'Pan vertritt im übrigen bei Silius, genau wie auch Bacchus, die heile Welt ungestörten Friedens.' Kißel (1979) 22 n.39 and Schubert (1984) 204-6, who considers his being 'Gott des Friedens und der Schonung' and contributing a 'Betonung des Pastoralen' as the reasons for Silius' choice. He does, however, note the parallel of Mercury at Carthage (see n.212 below), but without recognising its dynastic implications.

[210] 'Die ungewöhnliche Wahl Pans als Götterboten erklärt sich wohl daraus, daß Pan als Sohn des Hermes dessen besonderen Aufgabenbereich übertragen bekommt.' Burck (1984b) 47. Borgeaud (1988: 134) notes how Herodotus' Pheidippides has a connection with the Pan who appears to him, since he as messenger and Pan as son each have a Hermetic connection.

[211] Verg. *A.* 4.265-78, 556-70. On filiation as a trope for literary succession, see Ricks (1975), Hardie (1993) 98-119, Cowan (2006). Interestingly, Borgeaud (1988) 91 sees the effect of Hermes upon Priam at Hom. *Il.* 24.358-60 as 'a sort of "panic"'. Very similar is the impact which Mercury has upon Aeneas at Verg. *A.* 4.279-80. Silius' Jupiter also sends Mercury to stir Hannibal and fill him with false hopes of victory in a closer replay-cum-inversion of the scene at Carthage. On this scene, see Vessey (1977) 329-30, who does not, however, mention the Virgilian intertext.

[212] Verg. *A.* 1.297-303. Our passage has verbal echoes in references to *corda* and Jupiter's will (*uolente*).

[213] See Roscher III.i.1378.14ff on Pan's Italian cults in Regium, Pandosia, Sybaris, Metapontum and Salapia.

[214] *dextera lasciuit caesa Tegeatide capra | uerbera laeta mouens festa per compita cauda.* 13.329-30. Pan by name is associated with the Lupercalia at Verg. *A.* 8.343-4. Ovid's aetiology of the festival at *Fast.* 2.267-474 begins with the Arcadian Pan brought to Italy by Evander (as at 5.99-102) before his name is similarly transmuted into Faunus.

Silius' Pan is an emphatically Greek figure who suggestively returns to Arcadia when his task is done (13.343-7). Dubious Italian credentials are insufficient explanation for his presence here.

It is true that he is – along with Dionysus – the god most associated with possession, and especially mass possession, but normally that is to produce the effect of panic, a wild, confused collective madness.[215] A closer examination of instances of panic, however, especially in a military context, reveals that the god's intervention is not randomly destructive. As Borgeaud (1988: 91) notes, 'he helps those he loves by creating disorder among their enemies.' Thus, for example, Pausanias (10.23.5-8) tells how the Gauls who had been beaten back from Delphi were seized by panic and descended into madness, killing each other in the belief that they were slaying Greeks. As well as driving the already defeated into a frenzy, the god can forestall war, and even, as in the present case, the sack of a city, as when he panicked the Boeotians, who as a result abandoned their siege of Megara (Polyb. 20.6.12). In a Roman context, too, Plutarch tells of panic before the battle of Pharsalus in Pompey's camp, which was pitched near a cave of Pan, an 'equivalent to a bad omen' which did not forestall battle, but should have, since ignoring it led to defeat.[216] That a friendly Pan should thus prevent rather than provoke war is not then of itself unusual since, as Borgeaud (ibid.) writes, 'panic either makes battle impossible…or else follows the battle and falls upon an enemy already vanquished'. However, it remains panic, a madness which is still destructive, even if it is only so to the enemy, far removed from the calm, awed *religio* which Pan inspires in Silius' Roman soldiers. Though the end is consistent with the god's common practice, the means still constitute a reversal, and the reason for this rests largely in intertextuality.

Pan does not appear very often at all in Latin literature outside pastoral or passages for which he provides pastoral colour, often associated with his pipes.[217] In the third book of Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, however, he appears, following the commands of Cybele, to madden Cyzicus and his people into what is effectively civil war against the Argonauts, who have accidentally landed back at the shores they had just left (V.Fl. 3.43-57):

> *ut notis adlapsa uadis, dant aethere longo*
> *signa tubae uox et mediis emissa tenebris:*
> *'hostis habet portus, soliti rediere Pelasgi!'*
> *rupta quies, deus ancipitem lymphauerat urbem*
> *Mygdoniae Pan iussa ferens saeuissima Matris,*
> *Pan nemorum bellique potens, quem lucis ab horis*
> *antra tenent, patet ad medias per deuia noctes*
> *saetigerum latus et toruae coma sibila frontis.*
> *uox omnes super una tubas, qua conus et enses,*
> *qua trepidis auriga rotis nocturnaque muris*
> *claustra cadunt. talesque metus non Martia cassis*
> *Eumenidumque comae, non tristis ab aethere Gorgo*
> *sparserit aut tantis aciem raptauerit umbris.*
> *ludus et ille deo, pauidum praesepibus aufert*
> *cum pecus et profugi sternunt dumeta iuuenci.*

[215] Panic is first attested in [Eur.] *Rhes.* 34-7; Clearchus of Soli's treatise, Περὶ τοῦ Πανικοῦ, survives only as a title quoted by Ath. 9.389f = fr. 36 Wehrli. The most systematic account is at Aen. Tact. *Poliorketika* 27. On the phenomenon, see Borgeaud (1988) 88-116.

[216] Plut. *Pomp.* 68, *Caes.* 43. Omen: Borgeaud (1988) 101, paraphrasing Plutarch.

[217] Pastoral: e.g. Verg. *E.* 2.31-3, 4.58-9, Calp. *Ecl.* 4.133-6, 9.71-2; colour: Verg. *G.* 1.17, Prop. 3.3.27-30, Ov. *Met.* 14.515-7.

Here Pan is the familiar instigator of panic, of violence, of civil war, of the sack of a city.[218] In Silius, he is precisely the opposite. Yet this is not quite the simple, antiphrastic imitation which Burck suggests.[219] Pan's actions outside Capua reverse in almost every detail his Valerian counterpart's at Cyzicus.[220] The latter, as we have seen, was not merely panic but impious, fratricidal, civil war, the sack of a city, indeed hell on earth, very much what Silius depicts when Tisiphone provokes a similar madness at Saguntum.[221] At Capua, the Romans are about to sack a city and engage in a fratricidal civil war, since destruction of their kin, the emphatically Trojan city and its people, could be of no other kind. They are about to replay the sack of Troy, sacking *tecta… | Troia*, re-enact *Aeneid* 2, just as the Argonauts, and hence just as Valerius had.[222] They are about to replay the sack of Saguntum as inspired by Tisiphone, which itself replayed Troy. All this the inverted Pan forestalls. Just as Hannibal's attack on Rome inverted the events of *Aeneid* 2, and Rome proved that it could avoid the obsessive repetition of Troy's fate, so here Capua, *altera Roma*, *altera Carthago* is not quite *altera Troia*.

One other aspect of Pan's intervention must be addressed.[223] His possession of the Roman soldiers to positive ends is an inverse, not only of his own usual activity, and specifically of his intervention at Cyzicus, but of the sinister manner in which Venus possessed the Carthaginians also at Capua two books earlier.[224] Firstly, there is the odd and, for several lines, unqualified designation of the mysterious deity simply as *mitis deus*. The reader's ignorance of which god is present is mimetic of the ignorance of the soldiers, through whom she initially focalizes, since he is *non cuiquam uisus*, and his mildness alone can be deduced from the effect he produces.[225] However, this very sense of mystery must provoke the curious reader to speculate on the identity of the god, and the description *mitis* is almost all she has to go on. The adjective is a relatively rare one for describing the generally far from gentle gods of antiquity, and only in Christian Latin is it used as an epithet of divinity with any regularity.[226] By some distance most of the applications of it to describe pagan gods are in prayers, urging the god to be gentle, or to appear in their gentle rather than other aspect,[227] while others contrast the god's actual harshness with possible gentleness,[228]

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[218] On this episode, see Burck (1970), Hull (1979) 406, Hardie (1993) 87, Manuwald (1999). On its resemblance to civil war, *infanda proelia* (V.Fl. 3.15), the near-fratricide of the Dioscuri (3.186-9), Hull (1979) *loc. cit.*, Hardie (1993) *loc. cit.*, who also notes the parallels with the sack of Troy. The tendency of soldiers suffering panic to attack their own is also exemplified by the case of the Gauls at Delphi, on which see above.

[219] 'Wenn Valerius Flaccus ihn bei seiner Aufhetzung zum Kampf als Pan *nemorum bellique potens* bezeichnet, so weist ihm Silius, wie er es gern mit der Verkehrung von Situationen oder Handlungsdetails tut, die umgekehrte Funktion eines Friedensstifters zu.' Burck (1984b) 47. Cf. Spaltenstein (1990) 228-9 *ad* 13.326.

[220] *pace* Ripoll (1999) 515.

[221] Pan's hair is compared to the Eumenides' (3.54); Tisiphone is named (3.214), presumably answering the question *unde tubae nocturnaque mouit Erinys*? (3.18), while she is presumably among the Eumenides at 3.217. On parallels with another Tisiphone, who provokes Roman legions to civil war in the simile at 6.402-6, see Hull (1979) 406; on Pan's replaying the Allecto of *Aeneid* 7, Burck (1970) 181; on war at Cyzicus and Saguntum as hell on earth, Hardie (1993) 87 and 81-3 respectively.

[222] To be more precise, they are prevented from doing so by the dawn: *quod si tanta lues seros durasset in ortus, | exstinctum genus et solas per moenia matres | uidisset stratamque dies in litore gentem*. V.Fl. 3.246-8, clearly evoking Priam's corpse at Verg. *A*. 2.557-8, synecdochic as it is for the fall of the city. There may even be an etymological pun on *ingens/gentem*.

[223] I leave aside the elaborate ekphrasis, whose probable debt to a visual representation is asserted by Duff *ad* 13.342 and Burck (1984b) 47. On Pan in Roman art, see *RE* Supp. VIII.987.64ff, Roscher III.i.1439.21ff., *LIMC* VIII.1 (Supp.) 923-41.

[224] For a full discussion of this episode see Cowan (2002) 37-52, with further references.

[225] Cf. Spaltenstein (1990) 228 *ad* 13.314: 'L'imprécision de *mitis deus*…contribue à ce caractère mystérieux'.

[226] *TLL* VIII.1151.80ff s.v. II.c *de numinibus* α on pagan gods.

[227] E.g. the poets' addresses to Apollo at Hor. *Saec*. 33 and Tib. 2.5.79, Deucalion and Pyrrha to Themis at Ov. *Met*. 1. 380, the Thebans to Bacchus *ibid*. 4.31, Arethusa to Ceres *ibid*. 5.497. Statius' Atalanta addresses Diana at *Theb*. 9.632 as *mitis Dictynna*, but the context of the desperate prayer for her son renders the formula as much a plea that she *be* merciful as a description of what she *is*.

[228] The narrator wishes that Juno had been *mitior* towards Callisto at Ov. *Met.* 2.435; Acontius asserts that Diana could be *mitis*, in specific contrast to her present *ferocia*, if Cydippe were to marry him, at Ov. *Ep*. 20.116.

or are describing a specific, often unexpected aspect.[229] Straight descriptions of gods as *mitis* are rare. Lucina is so described by Ovid as she facilitates the birth of Adonis, though even here the use is contextual and almost adverbial as she pityingly allows Myrrha to deliver her incestuously conceived child (*Met*. 10.550). It is with Venus that the word seems most closely and normatively associated. She is *mitis…Venus, miti…Venere* in Tibullus and *mitis Cytherea* in Statius.[230] This is not to say that the reader suspects that the gentle god is Venus; that possibility is forestalled by the anaphora of the masculine pronoun *ille* (13.320, 322). Indeed, the latter's positioning directly after the strong bucolic diaeresis in both lines may subtly hint at his real identity. Rather the epithet triggers an association in the reader, alerting her to the relationship of this passage to the influence of Venus upon the Carthaginians in Capua.

The verbal echoes are not of themselves strong enough for the reader immediately to think back to the Capuan banquet, but when the parallel has been established, the similarity of the *modus operandi* in each case is apparent. Both Venus and Pan act silently, gradually on their subjects, concentrate on the hearts, and produce a softening, enervating effect.[231] The effect of each is to alter a fierce, warlike group into one which is calm and peaceable. However, this effect is differently valorized. Venus and her Cupidines are described in the discourse of elegy and of moralizing attacks on luxury. Pan is emphatically pastoral, as the bucolic diaereses hint, and as the elaborate ekphrasis emphasises. Venus inspires a preference for the luxuries of *otium*, while Pan inspires *religio*, respect for the temples of Capua which they will not burn in conventional city-sacking fashion,[232] and for their kin, the Trojan Capuans. While the corrupted Carthaginians burn with passions, the Romans abandon their desire to destroy the city. Moreover, just as Venus corresponds to her destructive self in the *Aeneid* and the *Argonautica*, to Virgil's Allecto maddening Amata and provoking war-lust in the pastoral Latins, and to the destructive forces of Tisiphone at Saguntum and Capua, so Pan is her inverse, and inverse to his own Valerian incarnation, who has so much in common with the fury-like Venus at Lemnos. In dialogue with all these intertexts, the intervention of Pan presents an overwhelmingly positive picture, an inverse of the sacks of Troy and Saguntum, ultimately a frustration of the narrative expectation, as are so many episodes in the fall of Capua, but for once a frustration devoutly to be wished.

As with other divine interventions in epic, it is just possible to explain Pan away on a metaphorical level. When the narrative resumes after Pan's exit, it does so with effectively a human account of the sparing of the city (11.348-50):

> *at legio Ausonidum, flammas ductore iubente*
> *arceri portis stantisque relinquere muros*
> *(mite decus mentis), condunt ensesque facesque.*

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[229] This is the predominant usage in Silius, as in the reference to Jupiter in Fabius' speech before Cannae at 7.239, or the punning contrast between fair weather/mild Jupiter and the wielder of the thunderbolt at 12.666. The extreme case, clearly illustrating that the association of *mitis* with a god's name does not signify that the god would be simply described as such, must be the suggestion that Mars, with his shield set aside, can be *mitis*, at Claud. *Stil*. 2.369; likewise if he is called 'Nerio', according to Gel. 13.23.19.

[230] Tib. 1.10.66 (partially metonymic), 2.3.72; Stat. *Silv*. 3.4.3. The latter contains the only other extant use of the junctura *mitis deus*, to describe not Venus herself but Asclepius working in close association with her (3.4.25).

[231] *tacitas* 11.389, *tacitis* 396 ~ *tacito* 13.316; *sensim*: 11.393 ~ 13.320 (also used of Venus inspiring Jupiter with lust for Pomponia at 13.618); *paulatim*: 11.422 ~ 13.325 (also used of Cupid obliterating Dido's memory of Sychaeus at Verg. *A*. 1.720); *corda:* 11.387 ~ 13.320, 344; *paulatim atrocibus irae | languescunt animis, et uis mollita senescit*. 11.324-5 ~ *mollitae flammis lymphae languentia somno | membra fouent* 13.418-9. The bard Teuthras *permulcet* his audience's ears at 11.290, as Pan *permulsit* the Romans' hearts at 13.344, though that is with his first song, before he is the explicit instrument of Venus.

[232] This contrasts strongly with the very recent behaviour of Hannibal, who substituted the plundering of the temple of Feronia near Capena for the sack of Rome which he had been denied, in a self-consciously impious act which reasserts his threatened rôle as a new Capaneus: *hac auidas mentes ac barbara corda rapina | polluit atque armat <u>contemptu</u> pectora <u>diuum</u>*. 13.90-1. On the incident, see also Liv. 26.11.8-13, citing a minor variant in Coelius (= fr. 28 Peter).

The adversative *at* could easily follow on from the soldiers' waiting for the signal to raze the city at line 315, and even the echo of a form of *mite* suggests that Pan could be interpreted as an allegory for the mercy of Fulvius.[233] However, too much is lost by a refusal to read with – as opposed to against – the text, to accept its epic machinery and use it to generate further levels of meaning for the episode.[234]

8. Shake your booty

If the narrative of Capua's fall is deprived of its climax in the destruction of the city, it is at least allowed a scene of plunder. Livy's account is very brief and is more precisely a description of the confiscation of the traitorous Capuan senators' wealth (Liv. 26.14.8):

> *quo cum* [*senatores*] *uenissent, extemplo iis omnibus catenae iniectae, iussique ad quaestores deferre quod auri atque argenti haberent. auri pondo duo milia septuaginta fuit, argenti triginta milia pondo et mille ducenta.*

By contrast, Silius describes the booty taken from Capua at considerable length (13.351-60):

> *multa deum templis domibusque nitentibus auro*
> *egeritur praeda et uictus alimenta superbi,*
> *quisque bonis periere, uirum de corpore uestes*
> *femineae mensaeque alia tellure petitae*
> *poculaque Eoa luxum inritantia gemma.*
> *nec modus argento, caelataque pondera facti*
> *tantum epulis auri, tum passim corpora longo*
> *ordine captiua, et domibus deprompta talenta,*
> *pascere longincum non deficientia bellum,*
> *immensique greges famulae ad conuiuia turbae.*

This passage demands comparison with that in book 14, where Marcellus takes Syracuse and, like Fulvius, spares the city, but unlike him, also spares its wealth (14.641-75), in the manner of a provincial governor reined in by Domitian's excellent administration (14.684-8). In Syracuse, a wonderful ekphrasis parades the riches of the city before the reader's eyes, implicitly focalized through those of the Roman soldiers primed to pillage (14.641-65), but Marcellus restrains them. In Capua, everything is described and taken.[235]

As the Capuan narrative draws to a close, the reader is reminded of its beginning, when many of the same luxuries were described.[236] Burck accounts for this detailed description of the luxurious booty by noting its contribution to the city's downfall:

> In addition, however, in the case of Capua, there is still the important fact that the wealth of this city and the luxurious life of its inhabitants contributed a good

[233] This is rather in contrast to his portrayal in Livy, where he and Claudius argue respectively for harsh and lenient treatment of the Capuan senators, though his view on whether to destroy the city is not recorded (Liv. 26.15.1-6). The idea that the episode reflected well on Rome in general is expressed at 26.16.11-3: *ita ad Capuam res compositae consilio ab omni parte laudabili…*

[234] On the dangers of reading gods as mere metaphors, see Feeney (1991) 173.

[235] There is also a strong echo of the plunder at Verg. *A.* 2.761-7, where Troy's temples are sacked, her treasures stolen, including drinking vessels, clothes and people – also *longo ordine* – who, though not yet *corpora…captiua,* soon will be.

[236] Burck (1984b) 48, Spaltenstein (1990) 231 *ad* 13.351, banally explaining 'ce qui prouve aussi leur convention.'

> deal to the Capuans, in their arrogance and presumption, renouncing Rome and thus causing their misfortune.[237]

This is an excellent point and deserves to be developed further. The fall of Capua, of all it is, despite its walls remaining, is symbolized by the death of Ascanius, the suicide of Virrius and that of Taurea to come, but also by this removal of all it stands for and all that stands for it. Capua has been constructed as a locus of luxury and its demise is marked by the physical removal of that luxury. However, one question remains. Whither is all that luxury being conveyed? No destination is specified, but it would not be a strained interpretation to assume that it was being taken to Rome. According to the moralizing tradition – of which Silius is a part – the importation of luxuries was one of the most important factors in bringing about the moral decline of the city. The general concept is widespread, often mingled with associated ideas of the worthiness of *paupertas*, the fear of foreign influences, and the financial ruin engendered by profligate tastes.[238] However, one of the clearest examples of the way in which the physical transportation of luxuries sows the seeds of decline, almost like a contagion, is Livy's description of the return of Cn. Manlius Vulso's men from Asia in 187 bc (39.6.7):

> *ii primum lectos aeratos, uestem stragulam pretiosam, plagulas et alia textilia, et quae tum magnificae supellectilis habebantur, monopodia et abacos Romam aduexerunt. tunc psaltriae sambucistriaeque et conuiualia alia ludorum oblectamenta addita epulis; epulae quoque ipsae et cura et sumptu maiore apparari coeptae. tum coquus, uilissimum antiquis mancipium et aestimatione et usu, in pretio esse, et quod ministerium fuerat, ars haberi coepta. uix tamen illa quae tum conspiciebantur, semina erant futurae luxuriae.*

If Vulso's men could, in such a physical manner, import luxury and hence moral decline to Rome, it is equally possible that Fulvius' could transport Capuan luxuries, and hence transport Capua, to Rome. We have seen how one of the many ways in which Silius' Capua constitutes *altera Roma* is that its decadence, luxury, and political ills anticipate those very problems at Rome, problems which Silius sees beginning after the high-point of Roman history at Cannae. We have seen how that decadence is also due, in Sallustian rather than Livian terms, to the destruction of Carthage. There is just the suggestion here that, with the nullification – if not actual destruction – of *altera Carthago*, instead of moving Roman power to Capua as Virrius had wished, Capuan luxury is moved to Rome.

9. The final act

Silius closes his Capuan narrative with an incident which, in Livy, occurs later, in Cales and in a different fashion.[239] Vibellius Taurea, the man who had so ineffectually duelled with Claudius Asellus, confronts Fulvius. According to Livy, he demands that the latter order his execution '*ut gloriari possis multo fortiorem quam ipse es uirum abs te occisum esse'* and only when Fulvius refuses, in compliance with the Senate's orders, does he commit suicide. Silius' version differs markedly (13.369-80):

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[237] 'Hinzu kommt aber bei Capua noch der wichtige Umstand, daß der Reichtum dieser Stadt und das luxuriöse Leben ihrer Bewohner zu einem guten Teil dazu beigetragen haben, daß sich die Capuaner in Anmaßung und Überheblichkeit von Rom losgesagt und dadurch ihr Unglück selbst herbeigeführt haben.' Burck (1984b) 48.
[238] Edwards (1993) ch. 5, esp. 176-8.
[239] Liv. 26.15.11-5, citing an alternative version at 16.2-3.

hic atrox uirtus (nec enim occuluisse probarim
spectatum uel in hoste decus) clamore feroci
Taurea 'tune' inquit 'ferro spoliabis inultus
te maiorem anima, et iusso lictore recisa
ignauos cadet ante pedes fortissima ceruix?
haud umquam hoc uobis dederit deus.' inde minaci
obtutu toruum contra et furiale renidens
bellatorem alacer per pectora transigit ensem.
cui ductor: 'patriam moriens comitare cadentem.
qui nobis animus, quae dextera cuique uiritim,
decernet Mauors. tibi, si rebare pudendum
iussa pati, licuit pugnanti occumbere letum.'

The incident here is more emphatically defiant, as Taurea – like Virrius – prefers freedom to life, or rather chooses suicide as the only remaining means to assert his freedom. It is interesting to note the conflict between the authorial approval given – grudgingly – to Taurea's action and the dismissive comment of Fulvius, structurally privileged at the close not only of the episode but of the entire Capuan narrative. However, it is on one small detail that I wish briefly to focus. Fulvius tells Taurea to accompany in death his dying homeland. As with Ascanius and Virrius, Taurea implicitly stands for Capua, an identification already anticipated when Claudius scrutinised him for a point of entry like Turnus scrutinising the Trojan camp. He thus provides yet another means by which to assess Capua, and specifically its fall. His suicide, Capua's suicide, Capua's self-destruction is represented here either as an act of *atrox uirtus*, a *decus*, or as a futile act of cowardice and bravado masquerading as courage. Silius leaves the question open.

Or does he? Taurea's death is not quite the last word. A moment must be taken to glance at the transitional formula which moves us to the death of the Scipiones and hence the *nekuia* (13.381):

dum Capua infaustam luit haud sine sanguine culpam…

Capua's perfidy was clearly a *culpa*, according to the authorial voice, and she has expiated it with her blood. Such language, however, is strongly reminiscent of another passage where the expiation is not so complete (Verg. *G.* 1.501-2):

satis iam pridem sanguine nostro
Laomedonteae luimus periuria Troiae;

Here is one of the classic aetiologies of the civil wars, tracing the cause back to Rome's distant Trojan origins. If Virgil's Trojan Rome was still in the process of expiating this guilt – and specifically this *periuria*, oath-breaking, the crime of Capua – how are we to read Silius' Trojan Capua as *altera Roma*? Perhaps they share, along with their Trojan ancestry, a hereditary disposition to *periuria*; perhaps Rome is doomed indeed to share the fate which befalls Capua in the *Punica*; or perhaps the allusion – perhaps *all* the allusions in this narrative – are antiphrastic, setting Capua as an inverse rather than a type of Rome. The question, this time without false closure, remains open.

10. Epilogue: now and then

Before we leave Capua, it is important that we consider its significance in the Flavian period. Such consideration is good practice in general terms, since it is one of the assumptions underpinning this discussion that the *Punica* was written to be of relevance to their contemporary situation. Moreover, the whole of the *Punica* is an extended meditation upon the influence of past upon present, both in terms of how events are shaped and how they are interpreted. However, in the case of Capua, the reader is specifically invited to compare the city's past with its present by two jarring authorial interjections. The first is part of his expression of shocked disbelief at the Capuan secession from Rome to Carthage, shock based partly on the past – their shared Roman ancestry – partly on the present, for *quisnam mutato tantum nunc tempore credat?* (11.32). This is an extremely enigmatic comment, so much so that it has been the object of suspicion and emendation as well as of varying interpretation.[240] Spaltenstein takes *nunc* to refer to the now of 216 bc and *tantum* to mean 'only', so that the times are all that have changed since the Trojan Capys founded Capua, which makes it remarkable that the city should consort with barbarians.[241] This has a certain internal consistency, and fits well with the rhetorical basis of the sentence upon the historical relationship between Rome and Capua. However, though *nunc* frequently refers – by analogy with the historic present – to the narrated now,[242] in contexts where the passing of time is mentioned, and there is a contrast between past and present, it generally contrasts that past with the Flavian present.[243]

More probable, then, is the contrast between the narrated present and the present of the narrator, but what is the basis of that contrast? Duff judiciously leaves the issue open, but Martin curiously describes the revitalisation of the *urbs trunca* by the colonies founded successively by Caesar, Antony, Octavian, and Nero, changes which Silius, as an inhabitant of Campania, would have witnessed.[244] It is not entirely clear how this rejuvenation serves as a contrast to the perfidy – as opposed to the subsequent desolation – of third-century Capua. More promisingly, Delz assumes, in defence of the line, an allusion to the same consul referred to in the second authorial interjection (11.122-9):

> *tantane, omnipotens, caligine mersa latere*
> *fata placet? ueniet quondam felicior aetas,*
> *cum pia Campano gaudebit consule Roma*
> *et per bella diu fasces perque arma negatos*
> *ultro ad magnanimos referet secura nepotes.*
> *poena superborum tamen haec durabit auorum,*
> *quod non ante suos Capua ad suffragia mittet,*
> *quam Carthago suos.*

The basis of the contrast here is much more straightforward. The third-century Capuans impertinently demand a share in the consulate, which leads to war, whereas the later Capuans will be Roman citizens and there will even be elected a consul from the city. It has been argued that the consul is T. Clodius Eprius Marcellus, who appears in Tacitus' *Dialogus* and who was a prominent figure, consul, and perhaps champion of Capuan

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[240] Burck (1984b) conveniently omits the line from his discussion.

[241] Spaltenstein (1990) 106 *ad loc.* His dismissal of Duff's translation is based on a misreading of the latter's 'have changed' – i.e. from the perspective of the Flavian era – as 'had changed' – i.e. from that of 216 bc – which would indeed make little sense of *tantum* as 'so much'.

[242] It is particularly common in anaphora, meaning 'at one moment…at the next', a usage of which Silius is inordinately fond: 3.346-7 *et saepissime*.

[243] *propius si pressa furenti | hasta foret, clausae starent mortalibus Alpes, | nec, Trasimenne, tuis nunc Allia cederet undis.* 1.545-7; *et uberior Rutulo nunc sanguine Thapsus.* 3.261; but cf. the ambiguity of *quae uada Faunigenae regnata antiquitus Arno | nunc uoluente die Trasimenni nomina seruant.* 5.7-9.

[244] Volpihac-Lenthéric & Martin (1984) 218 n.5.

interests under both Nero and Vespasian, successfully prosecuting Thrasea Paetus.[245] The punishment too seems straightforward and has a deal of poetic justice about the two enemies of Rome becoming voters at the same time.[246] However, subtle hints threaten to complicate the simplicity of this picture of crime, punishment and redemption, hints which may move towards an explanation of precisely how times have changed so much, or only time has changed.

The assimilation of Capua and Carthage into the Roman empire – into Rome – serves to further the collapse of distinctions between and the confusion of the identities of the various cities. Capua and Carthage, which stand as images, inversions, repetitions, anticipations, premonitions of Rome, here *are* Rome. With the increasing co-equivalence of *urbs* and *orbis*, all *urbes* within the *urbs* become replays of Rome. As such, the conflict depicted here is tainted with the guilt of – if not depicted as – a civil war. Capua's disregard for the bonds of kinship has already figured her secession from Rome as an act of familial impiety and hence of civil war. As to tango, however, so to fight civil war: Rome's siege and averted, perverted sack of Capua are figured in terms of her sack of Alba, the Greeks' of Troy, Hannibal's attempt on her own walls. Rome is fighting herself. A civil conflict between Rome and Capua would seem a very familiar concept to survivors of the civil wars of the four emperors, when Capua sided with Vitellius.[247] The subsequent decline of Capua under the resentful Flavians is now generally thought to be exaggerated, in part owing to epigraphic evidence showing that her titulature included *Flauia*, that Vespasian returned land to Diana Tifatina, and that Domitian decided a Cretan boundary dispute in her favour.[248] If Capua is no longer a Rome fighting Rome, but re-adopted by the capital, is this why the latter is now *pia*? Spaltenstein reasonably dismisses Duff's translation 'loyal' as inappropriate to the context, as on the surface it is.[249] However, Rome *is* showing fraternal *pietas* towards her fellow-Trojans, the Capuans. Yet if it is *pietas* now to do what she violently refused to do before, was she earlier *impius*, fratricidal, implicated in civil war? Does *tantum* after all mean not 'so much', but 'only'? Times have changed but the conflict between Rome and Capua, Rome and herself, continues. This potential reference to time's lack of impact on the situation serves to elide the difference between past and present: there is conflict now as then, and that conflict was civil then as now.

One might detect an underlying note of despair in Silius' prophecy. The emphasis on the obscurity in which Jupiter allows the future to lie hidden ostensibly refers only to the narrated present, a time when conflicting Capuans and Romans could not know what happy times lay in the future, a future of which the narrator then gives the reader a sneak preview.

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[245] On the identification, see Dessau (1911) 622-5; his Capuan birth is attested at Tac. *Dial*. 8.1 and *CIL* X.3853 = *ILS* 992; cos. *ad* 62, cos. suff. 74; for his possible rôle as defender of Capuan interests, see Pobjoy (1995) 204-6. If Dessau is correct, the allusion to Marcellus may in itself undermine the positive import of this prolepsis. He 'was not a good man, and represented for T[acitus] the perversion of great gifts.' (Mayer (2001) 103 *ad*. Tac. *Dial*. 5.7); he became a by-word as a *delator* (Winterbottom (1964) 92-3); in ad 79, he conspired with Allienus Caecina against the dying Vespasian and, when summoned to trial, cut his throat with a razor (Dio 66.16.3-4 with Murison (1999) 174-5 *ad loc.*). In general, see *RE* VI.261.42ff.

[246] The precise meaning is a little obscure, but it presumably refers to Caesar's foundation of the colonies at Capua and Carthage, though, if the sense is that Carthaginian suffrage began before rather than simultaneously with Capuan, there may also be an allusion to C. Gracchus' ill-fated colony Junonia. See the discussion at Dessau (1911) 626; Spaltenstein (1990) 113 *ad* 11.128.

[247] Tac. *Hist*. 3.57 figures her rôle as a translation of local rivalry with Puteoli onto the plane of civil war: *a quibus municipia coloniaeque impulsae, praecipuo Puteolanorum in Vespasianum studio, contra Capua Vitellio fida, municipalem aemulationem bellis ciuilibus miscebant*.

[248] *col(onia) Flav(ia) Aug(usta) Felix*: *AE* (1969/70) 635, an inscription – the same settling the dispute – in the territory of Cnossus, dated between 81 and 84 ad, on which see Keppie (1984) 96-7, Frederiksen (1984) 345 nn.127 & 132, D'Isanto (1993) 23. Tifatina: *CIL* X 3828 = *ILS* 251, with D'Isanto (1993) 24. On Capua's favour or disfavour under the Flavians, see Pobjoy (1995) 198-207.

[249] Spaltenstein (1990) 113 *ad loc.;* he prefers '*sacra*' or 'pieuse'. Dessau (1911) 623 with n.1 takes it as an imperial virtue, eliding the difference between state and princeps, and further evidence of Silius' 'Unterwürfigkeit'.

However, the very mention of the future's obscurity must throw into doubt the authority of any prophecy.[250] Jupiter is not always a reliable prophet.[251] This uncertainty – phrased as certainty – about the future, is also evoked by the phrase *ueniet quondam felicior aetas*. The combination of *felicior*, or even *felix*, with *aetas* is remarkably rare in extant Latin. Indeed it occurs only thrice elsewhere.[252] Ovid's Cumaean Sibyl tells of her deception of Apollo and the punishment which ensued now her youth has passed, *iam felicior aetas | terga dedit*, a punishment which – implicitly – the great seer failed to foresee.[253] Most closely and most significantly echoed by our passage, however, is Lucan's bizarre desire that one day, Pompey's death will no longer be accepted as true (8.869-72):

> *ueniet felicior aetas*
> *qua sit nulla fides saxum monstrantibus illud;*
> *atque erit Aegyptus populis fortasse nepotum*
> *tam mendax Magni tumulo quam Creta Tonantis.*

Here is an exact repetition in the same sedes of what is – perhaps surprisingly – a very rare iunctura, more precise still if the *quondam* – adding yet more doubt and vagueness – did not interpose itself after *ueniet*. Even the mention of Jupiter, albeit to different effect, flags the connection between the passages. What can the significance of the intertextuality be? Lucan's despair is such that he tries to obliterate the memory of Pompey's death, the death of the Republic, preferring, as in the opening lines of book 2, ignorance and falsehood to the pain of truth. Better that the Callimachean sleight of hand which can 'prove' Zeus' Arcadian origins serve also to 'prove' that Pompey never died and that the Republic still lives. But he did; it does not. Happier times for Lucan are times of self-delusion, when no one believes the truth, when there is no *fides* given to physical evidence. Any echo of such a passage, especially in the context of the future's obscurity, must cast at least the suggestion of doubt on this happy age to come.

That Silius should be referring to the future as a happier age is in itself surprising. Throughout the rest of the poem, his constant refrain is of the decline from the moral high-point of Cannae, perhaps even from before then. Why then should the future be praised here? It may be that the future predicted here is not so different from the decadence foreseen elsewhere. *quondam* occurs no fewer than fifty times in the *Punica* and only twice does it refer to the future rather than the past.[254] Once here, and once in Voluptas' parting words to Scipio and his new best friend, Virtus (15.123-7):

> *sed enim indignata Voluptas*
> *non tenuit uoces. 'nil uos iam demoror ultra:'*
> *exclamat 'uenient, uenient mea tempora quondam,*
> *cum docilis nostris magno certamine Roma*

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[250] One wonders whether there is an engagement – echoing and inverting – in the protest at Jupiter's concealment of the future here with Lucan's complaint against his *revelation* of the future civil wars through portents, when it would have been better for Rome at least to have been spared anxiety on top of suffering, at Luc. 2.4-6: *cur hanc tibi, rector Olympi, | sollicitis uisum mortalibus addere curam, | noscant uenturas ut dira per omina clades?* Fantham (1992: 80 *ad loc.*) compares the famous *dis aliter uisum* at Verg. *A.* 2.248. The extent of Lucan's despair may be gauged from the way that the suffering is taken as a given; it is the foreknowledge of it which, in his world, compares to the death of Panthus.

[251] On his failings in this department in the *Aeneid*, see O'Hara (1990) 91-102, 132-63 and index s.v. 'Jupiter'.

[252] Least relevant to our present passage, though closest in time, is Quintilian's clever reversal of the conventional angst of the artist who feels that earlier ages have said and done it all, *Inst.* 12.11.22: *tot nos praeceptoribus, tot exemplis instruxit antiquitas, ut possit uideri nulla sorte nascendi aetas felicior quam nostra, cui docendae priores elaborarunt.*

[253] Ov. *Met.* 14.142-3.

[254] Past: *OLD* s.v. 1; future: *ibid.* 2. I discount the witty and deliberate ambiguity of the shades who are either dead or yet to be born and *quondam* people either way: *'hic tenebras habitant uolitantque per umbras | innumeri quondam populi.'* 13.524-5.

seruiet imperiis, et honos mihi habebitur uni.'

One might ask whether this is the happier time which will come *quondam*, the age of Voluptas;[255] when Rome and Capua will become one – *Roma altera Capua* as much as *Capua altera Roma* – not only so that their conflict constitutes civil war, but that the former will become as much a *locus* for luxury, decadence, and political unrest as the latter; when the city dominated by Voluptas will become fused with that ruled by her alter-ego Venus;[256] when Rome's moral collapse will mirror the physical fall of Capua.[257] In terms of the text's surface meaning, the answer must be no.[258] However, in terms of the underlying implications of Silius' words, of the position of the prophecy within an episode – indeed, a poem – which figures the decline of Rome and adumbrates, dramatises it – among many other things – through the demise of Capua, in these terms, the reader must allow herself, at the very least, a maybe.

11. Towards a conclusion

To draw any neat conclusions at the close of a discussion which has repeatedly stressed the complexity and elusiveness of its subject would be both futile and a little dishonest. For the sake of clarity, however, some of the web's more prominent strands may be teased out. It has been clearly established that Capua stands as a symbol for a number of ideas and – which is to some extent the same thing – other cities. What precisely those ideas are, in what ways, and to what ends it symbolizes the cities, are more complex issues. In relatively simple, intertextual terms, she allows the replay of other narratives and thus the appropriation of their themes for the characters and events of the *Punica*. Thus she is Carthage when Hannibal is banqueting, Pallanteum when he is sight-seeing, Troy, Alba, Saguntum, Carthage, and the Rome that might have been when she is captured. Yet even these intertextual relationships feed into the more complex web of ideas which she represents. She is a locus of luxury, of decadence, of political unrest, of all the things which Rome saw as wrong with itself. This is one way in which it is another Rome, but others include its rôle as a rival to be destroyed or assimilated – in which she resembles Alba, Veii, Carthage, and many others – and the related rôle of what Rome might have been had history developed in a different direction. This, in turn, allows meditation on the development of Rome itself, in what ways and to what extent – if indeed any – it differs from the hypothetical rise of Capua. Always, there is the interplay of past and present, which influence each other, co-exist with each other, are blended until they, like the cities which exist in them, begin to blur.

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[255] On such a reading, *felix* may assume some of its sense of 'wealthy' (*OLD* s.v. 6).
[256] The time to come could thus be that of one of the goddess' aspects, *Venus Felix*. On the latter, esp. her association with Sulla, see *RE* VIIIA.1.861.63ff., Weinstock (1971) 81.
[257] For pleasure and luxury's overthrow of once – *quondam* again – flourishing cities, see Virtus' words at 15.92-3: *idem aspice, late | florentes quondam luxus quas uerterit urbes*. The context – Rome's rise through *uirtus* in contrast to these other cities – makes perfectly clear the prolepsis of Rome's similar fate. Cf. McDonald (1970: 154) on Voluptas' words: 'Silius almost leaves the feeling that the prophecy has been fulfilled.'
[258] Contrast the interpretation at Burck (1984b) 10: 'Silius setzt mit einem Anruf an Jupiter ein, der die Ungeheuerlichkeit der folgenden Ereignisse im Kontrast zu dem viel später erfolgten Ausgleich Capuas mit Rom unterstreichen soll. Schon diese proömiumsgleiche Einführung verdeutlicht das Gewicht das der Dichter den folgenden Ausführungen beimißt.'

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